



## **6 WORLD WATER FORUM** **TIME FOR SOLUTIONS**



### **REPORT ON PARTICIPATION OF SIC's REPRESENTATIVES IN THE SIXTH WORLD WATER FORUM MARSEILLE, FRANCE, MARCH 12-17, 2012**

The Sixth World Water Forum was organized in March 12 to 17 in Marseille by joint efforts of the World Water Council and the Government of France. Almost three years of preparation preceded the Forum itself. Hundreds of organizations coordinating and participating in thematic and political processes were engaged in this preparatory work. In his speech at the final plenary session the President of WWC Mr. Loic Fauchon underlined that 19 800 people from 168 countries, over 80 ministers and ministerial level officials, 1400 representatives of regional and municipal organizations from 60 countries, including 250 mayors took part at the Forum. In addition, 700 children and over 2000 representatives of the youth participated in different Forum events. More accurate data on participation will be given in the International Forum Committee's report to the WWC Board but, in general, it is evident that the scale of given Forum does not differ much from Istanbul and Mexico Forums.

However, representation at this Forum showed a significant difference: 200 and more people represented USA, Brazil, Mexico, South Korea, China, and Japan each. Large delegations from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, as well as one representative from Turkmenistan (Mr. Balliyev K.B.) took part in the Forum from Central Asia.

SIC ICWC was represented at the Forum by its Director, Governor of WWC Board and regional Coordinator Prof. Dukhovny V.A., Deputies Director Mr. Sokolov V.I. and Ms. Ziganshina D.R., Head of International communications division Ms. Usmanova O.K., SDC project managers Mr. Mukhamedjanov Sh.Sh., Mr. Beglov I.F., Mr. Umarov Kh.U., and Mrs. Stulina G.V.

All the above-mentioned representatives were invited to the opening ceremony, which was held in a specially constructed pavilion for 2500 seats in the Parc Chanot on 12<sup>th</sup> of March. The ceremony was opened by Mr. Jean-Claude Gaudin, Senator Mayor of Marseille city. He, among others, noted that the city of Marseille knows what shortage of water means since the rapidly growing population and industry in the city and in the Aix-en-Provence as a whole are very limited in water sources. This is engraved for ever in the minds of our society. In order to solve water problem, a general recognition of this and financing are needed. It became evident that even for developed countries the time of easy water finished. Marseille will support activities of the World Water Council and keep an image of the world's water capital in the future as well.

Prof. Ben Braga, President of the International Forum Committee presented efforts that were undertaken in preparation to the Forum.

It was expected that Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the French Republic would welcome the Forum; however, for unknown reasons, Mr. Francois Fillon, Prime-Minister of France took the floor instead of him. Mr. Fillon underlined that France is provided with centralized water supply and sanitation for 89%. By 2030, the total country population will be 100% covered. The French Government sees its mission in assisting the developing countries in the solution of water problem. Annually, France allocates 600 millions Euros in form of assistance in these issues to Senegal, Bangladesh and other countries. For example, a water treatment plant of 10 millions was build in Gaza strip. The global water policy should be radically changed. We are facing new industrial revolution in area of water. He has called for transition from the model of response to water challenges to the model of proactive measures and global water saving. In this context, a new International environmental entity with water focus should be created. The upcoming Rio+20 conference should make respective decision. Francois Fillon also called the countries that have not yet become the parties of UN Convention 1997 on watercourses to join this global instrument and expressed willingness of France to organize fist meeting of the Parties, when the Convention is entered into force.

The welcome speech of Mr. Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General was shown on video an supported by the speech of Mr. Michel Jarraud, WMO Secretary General. Mr. Hwang-Sik Kim, Prime Minister of South Korea and Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev also delivered their speeches.

After a break, the floor was given to Peter Vosel, CEO of Royal Dutch Shell (the necessity of associating and solving jointly the water and energy issues and looking for low water-consuming sources); Prince Willem-Alexander of Orange, President of the Holland Water partnership (our experience in combating floods and natural disasters should be adopted everywhere); and, Peter Brabeck, Chairman of the Nestle Group (the nature pays dear for our errors - for example, disappearance of Lake Victoria repeating the Aral Sea disaster).

Angel Gurría, Secretary General of the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) underlined that, in 2020, 40% of the world's population will be living in river basins subjected to water stress. Major attention should be paid to sustainable financing of water supply. To this end, the Governments should increase financing in water supply to not less than 1% of GDP. Sustainable water supply can be achieved through a system of tariffs, taxes and transfers. Another prerequisite is to strengthen water governance at national, provincial, and local levels.

Julia Marton-Lefevre, Director General of IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) called for increased focus on the observance of environmental requirements during construction of new infrastructures.

It also should be noted that the Istanbul Water Consensus Pact remained open for signature during the Forum. As a result, as Pierre Victoria, WWC Governor reported, the number of signatories increased to over 1000.



## ***High Level Roundtable: Transboundary Waters***

***13 March 2012***

The High-level roundtable dedicated to transboundary water problems was held on 13<sup>th</sup> of March. The introduction was given by a US' representative and Mr. Bobokalonov R.B., Minister of land reclamation and water resources of Tajikistan. He said that the development of transboundary water resources takes crucial part for many countries in the world. That is why the President of Tajikistan proposed in December 2010 to declare the year 2013 as the International year of water cooperation since water more often unites rather than divides. This proposal was accepted by the UN. Tajikistan is in the heart of transboundary water issues in Central Asia. The country supplies 60% of water to the region and uses only 10% - the remaining water is used by our neighbors. Although the countries in the region cooperate, there is great potential for deepening of this cooperation. The Minister underlined that Tajikistan will totally support this process of deepening and called for conclusion of feasible agreements.

“Zimbabwe is a member of SADC (South African Development Community)”, said the Zimbabwe Minister of Water, a moderator, “which integrates the interests of several countries in the region. Our organization clearly shares responsibilities and views among the countries, whereby we improve effectiveness of cooperation through joint actions and agreements. We try to make our projects mutually beneficial. The first zonal protocol was signed in 1990 and further one attention was paid to identification of water deficit and its distribution”. The representative of Angola - member of the Community - added that cooperation involves not only sharing of water but also sharing of problems (floods, droughts, etc.).

In opinion of a representative from Egypt, when addressing transboundary cooperation, the whole set of issues in the basin should be considered rather than only water. Representatives of Luxemburg, Mozambique, Palestine, Finland, Greece, Albania, Macedonia, Iran, Turkey, and France took part in the debate. Whereas representatives of Luxemburg, Mozambique, and France, which signed UN Convention 1997, advocated it, a representative from Turkey said that there is no need for a global Convention if we maintain trust, regional stability, and water conservation. In unison to him but counter to the spirit of the meeting the representative of Kyrgyz MFA said that UNECE Convention does not reflect the interests of arid countries, while regional agreement do not solve the issues of rational water use. IFAS should be reformed and re-organized, with strengthening of bilateral agreements. Only operation of reservoirs in winter releases regime suits us, and, moreover, flow regulation from our side should be paid by downstream countries. The head of Uzbek Delegation Mr. Khamraev Sh.R. in his speech underlined the leading role of the republic in strengthening regional cooperation.

“Since independence, Uzbekistan has been always active participant and driver of cooperation in water and environmental issues among the region's countries, taking into account an importance of transboundary water for the future of the country and the region. While recognizing that currently the republic accounts for 50% of the total water withdrawals in the region, we have always approached responsibly to the development of water cooperation tools and instruments and supported joint activities among the countries. That is why in 1992 we initiated an Agreement about establishment of ICWC and joint water resources management in the Aral Sea basin. The republic was first country in the region that joined two Conventions 1992 and 1997. Uzbekistan, understanding its responsibility for cooperation among the countries in the region, put forward an initiative to dislocate the Executive Committee of IFAS, according to its conventional rotation, in Uzbekistan for 3 years. We fully support activities aimed to fulfill the decision of the Heads of State of April 28, 2009 concerning the creation of a mechanism for mutually beneficial cooperation among the region's countries and the implementation of the Aral Sea Basin Program 3 (ASBP-3).



The republic fulfills its obligation with respect to its neighbors in practice. By involving water users in management of water resources we develop the financial-economic mechanism through encouragement of higher contribution of the users to maintenance of the water sector (up to 5% of their net incomes) and creation of cross-sectoral incentives among all water actors for successful and efficient water supply. Uzbekistan has reduced water diversions from 65 km<sup>3</sup> to 52 km<sup>3</sup>. Our water conservation program will be developed further so that to achieve unit irrigation water diversion at a level of 9 thousand m<sup>3</sup>/ha. To this end, we are applying such means as reclamation of land, implementation of IWRM, installation of automation systems, and strengthening of water accounting in all chains of water hierarchy. We believe that the cooperative movement of all the countries in this direction would help to solve the problem of water scarcity in our region”.

The Head of the World Wildlife Fund reported on efforts made to join countries to Convention 1997 and underlined that 25 countries already joined it and called other participants to ratify the Convention. The UN-Water Secretary proposed to pay more attention to positive examples of cooperation. A representative of UNECE noted that uncertainty is the main problem in water management for which a solution needs to be found. In his opinion, such a solution includes legal and institutional mechanisms. At the end of the second part of roundtable, Mr. Rakhimov S. underlined the difference in the interests of upstream and downstream countries and called to take them into account. He also stressed that since this Forum is the Forum of solutions and obligations, his country will take an obligation to sign a bilateral agreement with Kyrgyzstan on small rivers by 2013.

The US' representative finalized the meeting, underlining a need to involve all stakeholders in cooperation, a necessity for sustainability, openness and flexibility of mechanisms and institutes, political will, a need to joint UN Convention 1997 and ensure that the year 2013 becomes the year of real actions rather than simply declarations.



## **Ministerial Conference**

**13 March 2012**

Later in this day the Ministerial Declaration was presented. The Declaration virtually reflected a variant of major points of the future water policy that would suit all. It should be noted that the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs thoroughly elaborated it in order to exclude all controversial points that could raise a protest of one or another party. Therefore, the Declaration is quite “smooth” since all contradictions were smoothed over.

While taking part in discussion of the Declaration, the Deputy Minister of Uzbekistan Mr. Khamraev Sh.R. underlined that Uzbekistan attaches great importance to water resources and attracts considerable budgetary and credit funds. Uzbekistan advocates international water cooperation on the basis of international water Conventions, and, at the same time, the Republic believes that the following priorities in water use should be clearly marked out: drinking water supply; food security; environment; and only then industry and energy. It is necessary to take concrete measures for water conservation and efficient water use. Uzbekistan is against breach of water-environmental regime of transboundary rivers, against causing harm and stands for separate understanding of water and energy resources.

The Minister of Tajikistan Mr. Bobokalonov R.B. underlined that Tajikistan is an initiator of the proposal adopted by the UN General Assembly that the year 2013 should be declared the International water cooperation year. The Republic is experiencing scarcity of clean drinking water, lack of electricity, and increased frequency of extreme events.

Finally, the Conference adopted the Ministerial Declaration in its initially presented version.

## **Session «Input of Central Asia to the World Water Progress»**

**15 March 2012**

The regional session “Input of Central Asia to the World Water Progress” was held on 15<sup>th</sup> of March.

The session was opened by Prof. Ibatulin S.R., Chairman of EC IFAS, who briefly outlined the preparatory work at the regional level prior to the Forum. Then, the floor was given to ICWC members: from Kazakhstan - Mr. Abishev I.A., Chairman of Committee for Water Resources; from Tajikistan - Mr. Khasanov Kh., Deputy Minister (instead of R.B. Bobokalonov); and, from Uzbekistan - Mr. Khamraev Sh.R., Deputy Minister.

The Sub-regional coordinator Prof. Dukhovny V.A. in his welcome speech underlined that we all came to this event to take new ideas and solutions presented at the Forum from the entire world and share huge experience accumulated in the Central Asian region in addressing water problems and promoting continuous improvement of political, engineering, economic, and managerial mechanisms. This allows us overcoming successfully both dry and high-water years and developing capacities of our organizations, professionals, and end water users. Thanks to countries’ aspiration and donors’ support, we have developed many unique instruments - the training system, IWRM implementation system, and regional information system. In support of the Minister Bobokalonov’s opinion, who stressed a potential for cooperation and willingness among all to develop it, at the last ICWC meeting in Almaty, measures were approved to overcome this year’s high flow probability and are already being implemented along Amudarya river and Syrdarya river. The guarantee of successful water management in the future is our solutions. Therefore, the best solution lays in common solutions and common adherence to these decisions. For the



development of cooperation, which our colleagues advocate, we should seek the points that unite us, look for consensus and avoid the points that separate us.

The session's participants were presented with the regional platform of priorities, targets, and solutions that was prepared on the basis of concept notes, comments received to these notes and following discussions during 5 workshops held among representatives of CA countries. The final version of the platform was approved at a workshop held in February 2012 in Shimkent.

Target coordinators reported on the results of their work on priorities: Narbayev M., representative of Kazakhstan in EC IFAS (priority «International cooperation on transboundary watercourses management to the benefit of all countries in the region»), Balliyev K.B., representative of Turkmenistan in EC IFAS (priority «Risk management and water security»), Mukhamedjanov Sh.Sh., manager of the Project "Water productivity improvement at plot level" (priority «Adoption of innovations in agriculture through agrarian reforms in order to achieve food security»), Sokolov V.I., regional coordinator of GWP for Caucasus and Central Asia (priority «Integrated water resources management – a tool for balancing multiple uses of water»), Sanginov S. (priority «Climate change and conserving environmental capacity»), and Dukhovny V.A., director of SIC ICWC (priority «Guaranteeing water for future generations»).

Ms. Strikelyova Ye., Regional environmental center of Central Asia, informed about on-going projects on IWRM implementation in Kazakhstan and about the results of pilot project aimed to adopt charges for ecosystem services in Chonaksu, Kyrgyzstan. Mr. Klimtchouk F., UN Center for preventive diplomacy, thanked for instructive and informative presentations and told about some projects initiated by the Center for strengthening of cooperation in the region, with involvement of Afghanistan. Mr. Kipshakbayev N.K. underlined a need for implementation of IWRM on a scale of transboundary basins and for fulfillment of ASBP-3 («We have plan of actions - now it's time to start acting»). Mr. Gafarov B., NGO from Tajikistan, stressed a need for addressing of water and energy harmonization issue.

Then, ICWC members took the floor. Mr. Abishev focused on work initiated in Kazakhstan for reconstruction of irrigation and collector-drainage systems and on subsidizing (up to 80%) of capital costs to those water users, who contribute to such work and to water conservation technologies. The Government also plans to develop an economic incentives policy for enlargement of private farms. Mr. Khasanov underlined efforts undertaken to develop solutions on the Central Asian priorities and made his proposals on their improvement (they were reflected in the protocol). Mr. Khamraev Sh.R. reported on achievements of Uzbekistan in implementation of IWRM, which covered 10% of the total irrigated area, and on the improvement of land conditions in the republic. He also noted the effective work of IFAS Executive Committee in Kazakhstan on implementation of the Joint Statement of the Head of IFAS State-Founders of April 28, 2009 (Almaty) and expressed willingness to take up the torch from Kazakhstan in strengthening cooperation within the framework of IFAS.

### ***Asia-Pacific Synthesis and Commitment Session***

The Asia-Pacific session dedicated to regional contribution to water security was held in the morning on 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2012. The main output of this session includes recommendations to be presented at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Asia-Pacific Water Summit in Bangkok. The session was chaired by Mr. Yoshiro Mori, former Japan Prime-Minister, President of the APWF (Asia-Pacific Water Forum). Representatives of the Asian Development Bank, ESCAP, FAO, UNESCO, and the Kuwait Water Fund took part in the session as panelists. Prof. Dukhovny V.A., as the coordinator of sub-regional process, reported on the results of Central Asian preparatory campaign, the resolution of Tashkent Regional Conference and presented the platform of Central Asian countries prepared by target coordinators and working groups.

In summary of the session, the focus was put on ensuring of water security, fight with natural disasters, and provision of growing population with food. Finally, a representative of Daegu city



(South Korea) presented an ambitious program of preparation to the 7<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, which is to be held in 2015 in this city.

### ***Signature of the Basin Organizations' World Pact***

Prof. Dukhovny V.A. on behalf of the Network of water-management organizations from Eastern Europe, Caucasus, and Central Asia (EECCA-NBO) and Dr. Sokolov V.I. on behalf of GWP for Caucasus and Central Asian signed the "World Pact for better water management".

### ***Session «Transferring Water Research Outcomes in Practice»***

Prof. Dukhovny was a panelist at the session dedicated to more intensive adoption of innovations in water practices. During the discussion it was emphasized that the main causes of disintegration of research and practice are the following:

- difference in mentality and purposes of research and practice (researchers often try to look far beyond and forget about the real-world problems, whereas practitioners prefer stand on the ground while forgetting about prospects);
- practitioners does not realize adequately the research capacity and the set of measures that science can offer for solving problems of the former;
- solutions offered by science very often do not pass testing in practice and approbations under concrete conditions and need considerable adaptation;
- researchers often focus on engineering solutions in isolation from political, social, economic, and human resources;
- any adoption in practice requires control and funds.

It was proposed to focus attention on practical demands and create conditions for researchers so that they could work on these demands and develop solutions together with practitioners. The phase of adoption should follow immediately after research solutions tested in small pilot conditions, with special financing, which is to be allocated on conditions that National water councils control this process. The plan of adoption should be a part of national water strategy. Integration of the interests of research and practice may create a good basis for continuous exchange between practitioners and researchers, will promote capacity building of practitioners, and will create necessary environment for joint discussions and work.

### ***Participation of SIC's representatives in thematic sessions***

The SIC's team took part in various sessions held during the Forum week. The following directions were of particular interest:

#### ***Information systems and data maintenance***

The information tools of cooperation - databases, information systems, and models - had wide coverage at the Forum. It was emphasized repeatedly that success of water cooperation policy



depends on usage of effective management tools, where transparency and guaranteed access to data on water resources and their use are major.

The development of information systems in support of efficient water use and transboundary cooperation is not simple since often data are dispersed, controversial and in different spatial and temporal scales.

The sessions on priority 1.5 “Contribute to cooperation and peace through water” demonstrated solutions implemented already and aimed to support cooperation among riparian countries sharing common water resources. In particular, the Mediterranean Information system EMWIS is formed by 16 multilingual national web-sites presenting water information and knowledge between and within the countries of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.

It is good to note that the worldwide principles of information systems have been already implemented in IS CAREWIB in the Central Asian region:

- Aggregation of databases and GIS
- Data management
- Integration of water and other data (e.g. socio-demographic, etc.) into a single system.

UN offered a common global mechanism to measure, monitor, and exchange research and social data, among which the proposed format of data presentation and the method of data validation is of great interest.

The session on target 2.4.5 «*Green accounting and data improvement: critical tools for informed decision making and sustainable growth*», priority 2.4 «*Promote green growth and value ecosystem services*» was held on 13<sup>th</sup> of March under coordination of UNESCO WWAP. The target «By 20xx, green accounting methodologies fully incorporating the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of water are demonstrated in national accounting case studies for XX countries». This session was built on the current need for reliable data for informed decision making and coordinated water accounting systems. The session highlighted activities of the European Environmental Agency and the UN Statistical Division towards improvement of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting for Water (SEEA-Water) and the International recommendations for water statistics (IRWS). Mr. Ivo Havinga from the UN Statistics Division made presentation on monitoring framework for water, where he emphasized that this monitoring framework should be included into the general information framework. Water information should contain also economic, energy and other natural resource data. It was also noted that statistics on the magnitude of water abstractions are often estimated rather than based on data that are measured. The level of uncertainty varies, but is particularly high for agriculture. Adequate historical datasets are rare, and the dates of available statistics are not always explicit. Besides, lack of agreed terminology, e.g. “green economy”, “sustainability”, etc. leads to discrepancies in data compilation and analyses. These problems should be overcome in order to create a common international framework on the basis of national information systems.

Then presentations were made by representatives from the Netherlands, Mexico, and China (Z.Gao, ICID President) on national water information system and accounting and their role in decision and policy making.

This topic of accounting and data improvement had something in common with the priority 3.2 «*Adjust pressures and footprints of human activities on water*», particularly with the theme on decoupling economic growth from water resources use and impacts.

### **Water governance**

A few sessions were held under “Enhancing good governance in the water sector”. OECD - the coordinator of this direction - laid the basis for analyzing governance issues at different levels and focused attention on seven areas, such as: (i) administrative issues, (ii) lack of information (iii)





policy and institutes, (iv) human capacity, (v) financing, (vi) competing interests, and (vii) accountability. Based on outcomes of the sessions dedicated to governance, the key recommendations were to enhance public governance, promote IWRM and openness in the water sector.

### ***Legal mechanisms of cooperation***

A necessity for strengthening of the legal mechanisms of cooperation at transboundary, regional, and global levels was emphasized everywhere. The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) together with the Dundee University, Green Cross, and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) organized a number of sessions in order to raise political recognition and enhance enforcement of principles and regulations of the international water law. UNECE also held sessions to draw attention to UNECE Water Convention 1992, which soon could become the only global water instrument in force.

### ***Water, energy and food***

At the high level panel «Water, food and energy nexus» it was noted that the approach taking into account the inter-dependencies of these three constituents is useful, inter alia, in terms of tracing “integrated” success. A proposal to include the environment as the fourth constituent was rejected since the environment is a basic – rather than additional – element for the development of water, energy and food provision. Various inter-dependencies between water and energy were considered under the 2.3. «Understanding the water-energy nexus and turning talk into action». Among others, it was underlined that particular attention should be paid to coordination of financing between water and energy sectors since the lack of funds in the water sector is obvious, whereas the energy sector as a whole does not suffer from financing problems.

Unfortunately, under this critical topic “Water, food and energy” discussed at the high level panel during the 6<sup>th</sup> WWF, all examples of successful solutions in this area were based on national case-studies, without presentation of transnational projects. The only example of the ECOWAS region (basin of Senegal, Niger and Volta) did not find successful solution, same as the lower Niger delta.

### ***Education and training***

The issues of water education and training were in the focus of the Forum week as well. Particularly, the following issues were emphasized: improvement of knowledge quality, sustainability of educational programs, a need to consider innovations and continuous collaboration with the community experts and practitioners in order to get site-specific knowledge applicable in practice. The final session on the priority «Contribute to cooperation and peace through water» especially stressed the role of training for strengthening peace and cooperation.

### ***Access to water and sanitation***

The intro-session on the Priority 1.1 «*Guarantee access to water for all and the right to water*» was held under coordination of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the World Bank’s Water and sanitation program on 12<sup>th</sup> of March.

The session’s participants were welcomed by Mr. Muenger F., Head of the water initiatives (SDC), who briefly introduced the situation with the access to water and sanitation and emphasized that in one decade 1 billion people got access to improved water sources. This is significant progress towards the respective MDG target. During the Forum week under this priority the following issues were addressed: practical implications of national policies to the right to water, moving towards universal and sustainable access to drinking water by 2025, financial mechanisms which suit the local needs, etc.



### ***Quality of water resources and ecosystem protection***

The session on priority 3.1 «*Improve the quality of water resources and ecosystems*» was held under coordination of Wetlands International. The gap between recognition of the role of wetlands and aquatic ecosystems in theory and their consideration in decision making in all sectors was addressed as the main challenge. Services delivered by ecosystems are widely recognized as being of significant importance to millions of people and biodiversity. They are important economic resources and support resilience for communities in the face of increased disaster risk and a changing environment. However, it is still a major challenge to move from appreciating wetland ecosystem value to water management that can benefit from and maintain it. The presentations of speakers from Wetlands International, UNESCO and GWP and related sessions addressed the key issues and challenges in this sphere. Particularly, it was noted that wetlands should be considered as the natural infrastructure of water management. Therefore, the functions of wetlands and their role should be taken into account in dealing with water management options. The main problem is to value biodiversity in monetary terms so that to engage with policy makers. On the other hand, efficient ecosystem management would help to solve many water-related problems. During discussion it was underlined that for valuing of wetlands we need multidisciplinary teams and multistakeholder approach. In this context, the lack of environmental economists was noted.

### ***Improvement of land and water productivity***

In order to achieve food security, it is necessary to improve productivity of irrigated agriculture. During the Forum's sessions, measures for improvement of land and water productivities were discussed. Those included improvement of O&M of irrigation systems, better water management, modernization of irrigation and drainage canals, and enhancement of financing, increased attention to soil preparation, selection of seed, fertilizer application and control of plant pests. Particularly, at the session «*Sustainable food security through increased productivity of rainfed and irrigated agriculture*» conducted on 14<sup>th</sup> of March Mr. Muller highlighted the general situation with food security in the world and voiced a wish to pay more attention to different specific conditions in various region during discussion. The heads of such large organizations as the World Bank, IFAD, FAO made their presentations at the session. Next session «*Sustainable food security through increased productivity*» by using treated wastewater dealt with more technical issues. Representatives from different countries took the flow at this session. It is interesting that 8 out of 10 reports addressed development of management mechanisms at farm and field levels. A representative from Mali focused on organization of water accounting system, the participant from India Mr. Maro highlighted problems caused by the lack of management mechanisms for small-scale farms. During discussions Mr. Mukhamedjanov Sh. shared his experience in Central Asia. In particular, he cited the Kyrgyzstan case-study, where they have experience in managing irrigation water for small plots, and proposed to collaborate in this direction with Indian experts. Prof. Kulkarni, ICWC Secretariat member, expressed an opinion that many issues and problems all over the world are similar, especially the insufficiently developed WUA system. Dr. Bart Schultz and Prof. Kulkarni offered to present the results of our work in next issues of ICID journal.

The session «*Sustainable productivity and lower costs of water management for food security at affordable prices for all*» was chaired by Mr. Gao, ICID President. The panelists included Bart Schultz, Pasquale Steduto from FAO and others. The reports addressed the topic of mechanisms, including economic incentives that play an important role for sustainability of developed mechanisms. A need for consideration of legal aspects was also raised.

As a whole, the Forum showed that water issues all over the world are very similar and the main lines of their solution are close, if not the same, to those that we are adopting in our projects and trying to implement in practice. The Forum demonstrated that our region and our professionals are not behind the world experts and we could not only adopt their experience but also share our developments. One example is an approach developed for the Sokolok canal (Kyrgyzstan) to irrigation water management for small-scale farms. Since SIC ICWC implements a number of successful projects aimed at improving land and water productivities in the region, potential lines of



collaboration were discussed with the technical adviser of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

### **Gender and water**

The Forum paid great attention to involvement of women in water resources management. Three sessions were dedicated to this topic.

The session «Water resources and gender equality. What is the link?» was organized on 13<sup>th</sup> of March by UNESCO WWAP. The participants cited examples of woman participation in water saving, adaptation to different conditions, including climate change, application of different irrigation techniques, and production of various crop varieties. Irina Bokova, Director General of UNESCO underlined that gender and water is a priority for development of our society.

On 14<sup>th</sup> of March, the session «Women leadership in water: presenting new thinking new challenges» was organized by «Women Water Partnership» with participation of active woman-leaders, including four water and environmental ministers from France, Uganda, Sri-Lanka, and South Africa. This is was very lively session. The participants in national costumes of their respective countries held broadsheets with messages.

The session identified 11 key messages:

- Let us move from talking to action.
- Needs-based approach! We know the what, involve us in the how.
- Empower women to play central role in the provision, management and safeguarding of water!
- Sustainability of watsan provision and management is a social issue, not a technical issue!
- Involve us as opportunities for rapid change! Promote women's leadership!
- Dare to let go and delegate responsibility to local level!
- In times of crisis, put your money where your mouth is!
- From policies to implementation, the principal actors change!
- 30 years of technical expertise but nobody told me about women – involve me and I will change!
- Include community and gender issues in water curriculum at all levels!
- This is the only way I know how to do it – now I realize it's time to change, let's work it out together!

The non-governmental organization «Gender and Water Alliance» held its session on 15<sup>th</sup> of March. The participants discussed GWA's plan of future actions: organization of work and financing of Steering committee, as well as potential sources of financing for local initiatives.

A need for gender-integrated approach to water management was stressed. At the institutional level, a gender perspective means generating strategies for changing the unequal relations of men and women to resources, decision-making and rights.

We presented a newsletter prepared to the Forum on "Involvement of women in water resources management in Central Asia" and leaflets on Gender and Water translated into Russian, Uzbek, and Tajik.

## **CONCLUSIONS FROM THE FORUM**

Such events as the World Water Forum is necessary and useful since the present water professional needs to collaborate with colleagues from different countries, take part in discussions, and share experience. At present, there is no local water problems - all water-related problems are of global nature and therefore no cameral solution can be found for them.



The present water problems can be solved only through an international platform. Water has no borders, except for hydro-geographical ones within hydrological cycle. It is almost impossible to solve all problems and achieve water security in a single state, especially in transboundary basins. In the real world, this can be achieved only by moving jointly in the spirit of cooperation at basin level.

Broad experience in solving transboundary water issues was accumulated. Here the main factor is political will and a desire of all parties to discuss and make mutually acceptable decisions. Everything hinges on honor and conscience of the parties' representatives - if these qualities are available, there would be not problematic to implement achieved agreements, provided that joint mechanisms are available. Therefore, the key factor of practical solution of water problems is professional personnel with skills of diplomacy, on the one hand. On the other hand, available platform for dialogue and cooperation is not so much important as mutually acceptable mechanisms for implementation of solutions.

The main lessons learnt by our delegation during the Forum week in Marseille in terms of future ways for improvement of water management in Central Asia are the following:

1. It is necessary to enhance water governance, including through the legal framework (legal mechanisms) and strengthen water-management organizations (staff and finances), especially at national level. Priority should be given to strengthening of integrated basin entities, covering coordination and development of all water-related organizations, including water supply (urban centralized one as well), irrigation and other entities responsible for recreation, hydropower, navigation, and ecology. Moreover, it is important to consider also groundwater use issues.
2. All stakeholders should be involved in the development of basins and sub-basins.
3. Sustainability of the water sector will depend on clear sharing of responsibilities and financing mechanisms: state subsidizing, clear and easy-understand mechanisms of water service charges (depending on profitability of water consumers), practical implementation of water charges mechanisms depending on used water quality. At the same time, in no case water should take the form of commodity.
4. The level of Water User Associations (WUA) begins to take important place in the current water management hierarchy in the Central Asian countries. The mechanism of financing WUAs needs to be elaborated further and strengthened in organizational, legal, financial-economic, and technical terms.
5. The government should pay due attention to support of modern irrigation and water conservation technologies. As the world's experience shows, the development of drip irrigation and mist irrigation on a large scale is possible only when the state subsidizes no less than 50% of costs.
6. Sustainable water management can be achieved only with reliable and accurate information. One of the main national priorities is to develop water information systems everywhere, down to water consumer (farmer).
7. Solutions on transboundary water management and use should be based mainly on economic mechanisms and relations that include sharing of costs and benefits, as well as joint construction of new structures.
8. In terms of capacity building in the water sector, particular attention should be paid to young generation, especially to involvement of young professionals in water governance. The



government should take organization of public awareness campaigns aimed at supporting sustainability of management mechanisms and ensuring water security for future generations.









**6<sup>th</sup> WORLD WATER FORUM - TIME FOR SOLUTIONS**





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