

GWP Chair Oyun Sanjaasuren – Press Conference COP23, Bonn, Germany

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Water is a vital resource for life and for sustainable development of the world. The world is facing a real risk of water scarcity – demand for the growing population, more food and energy is putting a major stress on water resources. The global demand for water is expected to increase by 30% by 2030.

The OECD Environmental Outlook to 2050 projects that more than 40% of the world's population is likely to be living in river basins under severe water stress, which means that demand for water will exceed available resources; and 20% of the population will be at risk from floods. The potential cost of natural disasters, the value of assets that are at risk can be enormous.

This is at the time, when even today more than 2.4 billion people still lack access to improved sanitation and at least 663 million do not have access to an improved water source. Poor sanitation, water, and hygiene lead to about 675,000 premature deaths annually and estimated annual economic losses of up to 10% of GDP in some countries (JMP report, 2015).

Food production is projected to increase by 60 to 110 percent by 2050. Uncertainties about the availability of freshwater and farmland may become the major barrier to delivering this increase in food demand. The doubling of the global crop production in the last half-a-century came at a high cost to land and water. Crop yields are plateauing while the groundwater levels are dwindling.

It is absolutely clear that the scale of investment needed is big and is going to increase. The **OECD-GWP** report 'Securing Water, Sustaining Growth' estimates that the benefits from strategic investment in water security could exceed hundreds of billions of dollars annually.

Investment is required for water supply for basic needs of clean drinking water and sanitation. Investment is needed to produce more food and more energy. Investment is also required to protect populations, cities, economies and ecosystems from water-related risks - risks of droughts and floods. The challenges are made more urgent due to higher consumption, more urbanization and is exacerbated by climate change.

NDCs of most countries very clearly identify water as the main climate change adaptation challenge, but also as an adaptation solution. SDGs include the Goal 6 on water security.

Leveraging finance is a pillar of GWP's WACDEP programme, which works to integrate water security and climate resilience in development planning processes and supports countries to create and enabling environment for water and resilience-related investments. Since 2014, WACDEP's project preparation and financing capacity directly leveraged more than 20 million dollars in water-related resilience investments through seven projects in Africa alone, with a dozen more in the pipeline.