



Investing in water security
for climate resilient growth and development

Policy Brief | No. 2

Building on the Foundations of Integrated Water Resources Management

Key messages:

- Water security and climate resilience are vital cross-sectoral themes in national development strategies.
- Leadership from central government is required to coordinate climate resilient development.
- Incorporating climate resilient development as part of integrated water resources management approaches will reduce risk across all sectors and reinforce cross-sector integration.

Water security is key to the realisation of Africa's development goals, and is also the primary medium through which climate change impacts will be felt. Building climate resilience into development across water dependent sectors – water supply and sanitation, agriculture, energy, environment, and others – is key to achieving long-term sustainability but will demand strong cross-sectoral integration and coordination. Building on IWRM foundations is an effective way to fast-track the integration of climate resilience in development planning.

Climate change is not a single-sector issue

Building sound water management practice across all water-related sectors contributes to climate resilience. The cross-cutting nature of water requires individual sector specialists to work with other sectors to identify cross-linkages and to ensure efficient and effective use of the resource.

Projected climate change, population growth and rising demand now mean that water must be valued more carefully. Water is recognised as the crucial link between food, energy and the environment, and is a central element in discussions on the Green Economy. The valuation of water for human and environmental uses deserves wider recognition across all sectors. Ecosystem services valuation provides a technique for this with respect to environmental uses.

Managing the competing demands for water and its linkages across sectors is best done as part of the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) approach. Climate change does not respect geographical, administrative or sectoral boundaries, and coordinated responses to strengthen climate resilient development are essential. Water is not a single sector issue, nor is adaptation to climate change.

The prospect of climate change obliges central planners and sector agencies to re-configure their portfolios by: (i) including more no/low-regret options which provide returns under any climate future; (ii) adapting climate change risky investments to reduce risk where feasible; and (iii) considering selected (climate change justified) investments as a hedge against the serious risks that would be caused by climate change.

Building on the foundations of IWRM

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg 2002 included a commitment from all member countries to prepare IWRM and Water Efficiency plans in the following years. IWRM has also been acknowledged and endorsed in high-level pan-African Ministerial declarations and by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCCC) as well as the UNFCCC secretariat. IWRM is summarised in the following schematic diagram (see Figure 1).

Many of the principles and practices underpinning IWRM (see Box 1) are equally valid for integrating and mainstreaming climate resilience in development planning.

A large number of African countries have IWRM strategies in place or under preparation, resulting in the establishment of cross-sectoral coordination mechanisms. Coordinated working practices have also become the norm in planning and strategy formulation. Figure 2 shows the progress as of 2008 in IWRM planning across the different states of Africa.

Improving cross-sectoral coordination

Countries that do not already have effective cross-sectoral organisations concerned with water and/or climate will need to address the issue of such coordination. In the short term, informal coordinating bodies may suffice but in the medium term water and climate could be coordinated and championed by a more formal body. In most cases, it is not effective to rely on one line ministry to coordinate others. For some countries, a central 'apex' body that is independent of sectoral pressures and with the convening powers to bring together sectors (such as Ministry of Finance/Economic Development Planning, Prime Minister's or Vice President's office) may be appropriate in facilitating coordination and could perhaps usefully extend their remit to cover climate resilience.

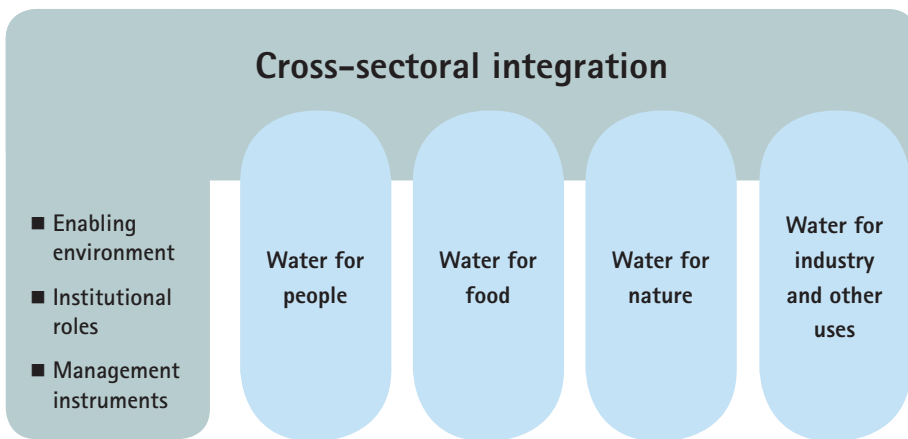


Figure 1. How IWRM helps coordinate water use across main sectors.

Box 1

Principles and practices from IWRM that are equally valid for mainstreaming climate resilience

- Integration is essential across planning levels and sector interests.
- Clear diagnosis is required of the national, sectoral and local levels.
- Sector strategies should address broader national development goals (e.g. growth, poverty, etc.).
- Planning should be based on existing institutions and processes.
- Roles and responsibilities need to be carefully defined at an early stage.
- Wide stakeholder participation is needed to help manage contentious issues.
- 'Soft' solutions need to be adopted as well as 'hard' ones.
- Implementation needs to be underpinned with capacity development.
- Individual champions can be influential.
- Continuous communication is invaluable.
- Transboundary dimensions to climate adaptation are important.



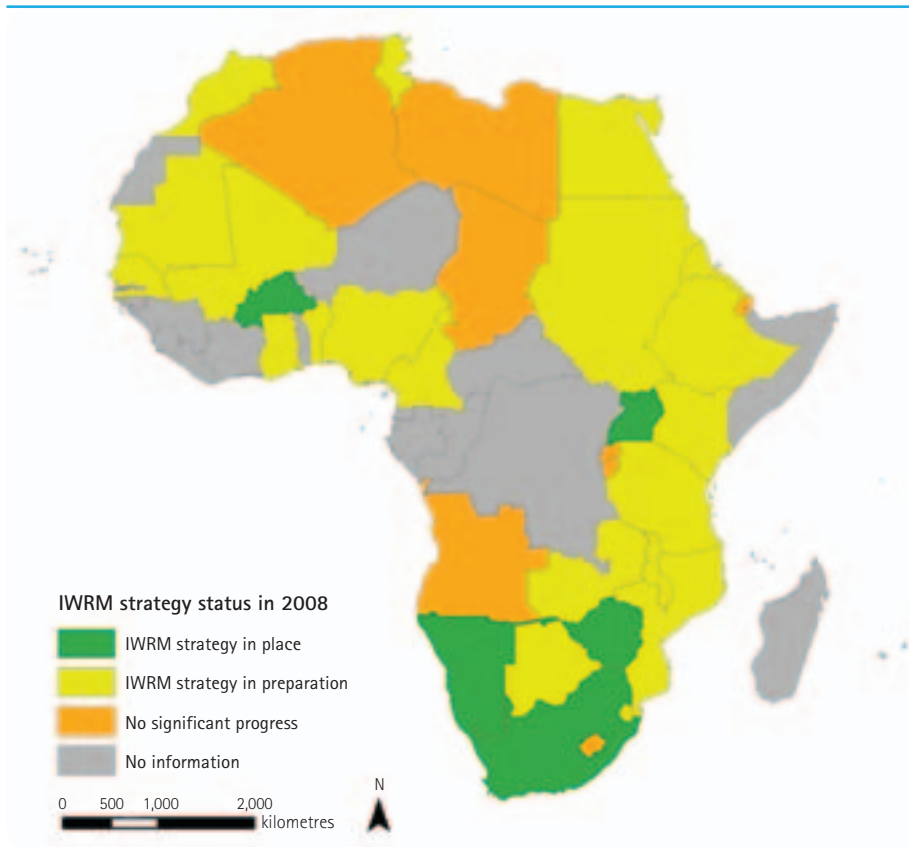


Figure 2. IWRM progress around Africa (2008).

**Box 2
Zambia – integrating water and climate resilience in national development planning**

In early 2010, Zambia embarked on its Sixth National Development Planning (SNDP) process, leading to the adoption and release of the SNDP in January 2011. The process was coordinated by the Ministry of Finance and National Planning, working alongside other line ministries. The process was structured to reflect national government strategies sectorally, and to provide an integrated picture of the national economic development and social trajectory.

Each of Zambia's sector strategies was convened by a sector specialist group, with cross-linking input from other sectors. Thus sector strategies and action plans were cognisant of, and integrated with, cross-sectoral issues. A strategy and action plan incorporating water and climate change adaptation was consolidated by the Ministry of Finance and National Planning, drawing together each of the sector strategies.

Climate change and water featured strongly in the SNDP process, and were well represented in the published SNDP. Strategies that built resilience to climate change were evident in many sectors (such as environment, energy, transportation, health, water and sanitation, agriculture, livestock and fisheries, mining, tourism, information and communications technology, natural resources, and local government and decentralisation). The effort built on earlier processes in which IWRM was integrated in Zambia's 5th National Development Plan.



Water and climate as a cross-cutting theme in National Development Plans

At present, few national development strategies in Africa include water security or climate resilience as a cross-cutting theme. There is an urgent need to rectify this in view of the long lead time involved in the preparation and implementation of such plans. Although central government provides leadership for this process, there needs to be wide civil society consultation to provide validation, public support and ownership. Civil society's increasing awareness of climatic factors can be brought to bear to influence national policy-making.

Key references

GWP. 2010. *Water Security for Development: Insights from African Partnerships in Action*. Available at GWP website: www.gwp.org

GWP IWRM ToolBox: www.gwptoolbox.org

Recommended further reading:

GWP/AMCOW. 2012. *Water Security and Climate Resilient Development: Strategic Framework*. GWP, Stockholm, Sweden.

GWP/AMCOW. 2012. *Water Security and Climate Resilient Development: Technical Background Document*. GWP, Stockholm, Sweden.

Summary of recommendations

- Identify institutional leadership with a clear mandate within central government to ensure action is taken.
- Incorporate water security and climate resilience as central cross-sectoral themes in national development strategies.
- Build on the foundations of IWRM to include climate resilience for water security in central government processes, and to ensure proper coordination.
- Raise awareness at the highest levels, and amongst all key stakeholders, of how water security and climate resilience contribute to sustainable economic growth.

