

## The Annual Ministerial High Level Forum

The High Level Forum (HLF) is an unmatched regional event, being the only meeting of Caribbean Water Ministers to date. The HLF affords Ministers and senior officials involved in water resources management a unique opportunity to share experiences and ideas for addressing water issues affecting the region and individual countries.

The Ministerial Forum is a joint initiative of the Caribbean Water and Wastewater Association (CWWA) and its partner, the Global Water Partnership-Caribbean (GWP-C) which began in 2005 as a session within the CWWA's Annual Conference and Exhibition.

Both CWWA and GWP-C saw the HLF as a proactive approach to addressing the water resources management problems in the Caribbean in relation to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Moreover, it is a means of bringing Ministers and policy-makers together to engage in discussions on critical issues on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and to provide the necessary technical information to support decision-making and the development and implementation of regional approaches/policies for water sector management.

The 10<sup>th</sup> HLF which takes place on October 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> 2014 in The Bahamas will be held under the auspices of Honourable Phillip E. Brave Davis, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Works and Urban Development through the support of the Water and Sewerage Corporation of The Bahamas.

This year's Ministerial Forum represents a collaboration between the CWWA, the GWP-C and the Global Environment Facility's Caribbean Regional Fund for Wastewater Management (GEF-CReW).



### HLF Themes (2005 - 2014)

**HLF 1 (Barbados) - IWRM and Effective Water Governance**

**HLF 2 (Tobago) - Challenges and Opportunities in IWRM in the Caribbean**

**HLF 3 (St. Kitts) - IWRM Planning and Policies in the Caribbean**

**HLF 4 (Jamaica) - Water Financing**

**HLF 5 (St. Thomas, U.S.V.I.) - Building a Water Secure Region: A Caribbean Response**

**HLF 6 (Grenada) - Water Crisis in the Caribbean: The IWRM Response**

**HLF7 (Guadeloupe) - Water Management Financing in the Caribbean: Pricing, Efficiency, Equity and Sustainability**

**HLF 8 (The Bahamas) - The Water and Energy Nexus in Caribbean Development**

**HLF 9 (Barbados) - Water and Sanitation and the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Addressing Wastewater Policy and Financial Challenges in the Caribbean**

**HLF 10 (The Bahamas) - Caribbean Water Security - Risks and Opportunities**

# THE 10<sup>TH</sup> MINISTERIAL HIGH LEVEL FORUM

The theme of the 10<sup>th</sup> Ministerial High Level Forum (HLF) is “**Caribbean Water Security - Risks and Opportunities.**”

Small Island Developing States, including those of the Caribbean are among the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. These impacts are likely to manifest themselves first and foremost through changes in the water cycle, affecting water availability, quality and security.

Expected impacts include reduced streamflows, increased levels of soil erosion and sediment loads (affecting beaches and the marine environment), deterioration in water quality and adverse health impacts. It is likely that short hydrological droughts will increase in frequency.

Greater year on year climatic variability is one of the more certain aspects emerging from climate projections. There is a need therefore to focus on strategies and actions that will minimise risk of disruption, minimise impacts on infrastructure and, increase resilience through broadening options.

All of these actions require policy responses. This is specifically and especially the preserve of the political establishment to create the necessary enabling environment. Policy responses are not contingent on better climate models or greater certainty about future projections, but appropriate best practices to meet the local environment.

Whilst there can be little doubt that water security in the Caribbean is at risk it is also true that this also provides opportunities to address some of the water management issues that have been confronting the Region.



These opportunities include an emphasis on resilient infrastructure, holistic management of water resources, improved water and wastewater service provision, promoting the use of treated wastewater as a resource, and smarter funding options.

There are examples of policy and legal initiatives that are putting in place enabling conditions for improvements in the water sector; there are tools that are being developed that incorporate climate risk. At the same time there is more that needs to be done to incorporate disaster risk reduction approaches into water service provision and, to address sustainable use of water resources and to achieve a better match between water usages and quality considerations.

The High Level Forum (HLF) provides a platform whereby countries can share progress towards a water secure region that is resilient to climate change, share their experiences and initiatives and held identify priorities for further action at both national and regional levels.

