



## **Conference on Water and Sustainable Development- Role of Youth for Sustainable Water Resource Management**

*World Water Day 2015 - A day to celebrate, a day to change, a day to prepare*

**Date: 24 March, 2015**

**Venue: Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform, Islamabad, Pakistan**

### **Draft Concept Note**

#### **Introduction**

World Water Day is celebrated on 22<sup>nd</sup> March every year to highlight a critical global water issue and to motivate stakeholders for identifying solution to it. 2015 is attributed to “Water and Sustainable Development”. It’s a day to make a change in thinking of the world water managers and leaders to make best use of water for sustainable development.

Pakistan is one of the most water stressed countries in the world and is rapidly heading towards water scarce situation. Per capita water availability has sharply declined from 2,900 m<sup>3</sup> in 1981 to around 1,100 m<sup>3</sup> for a current population of approximately 180 million. This situation will worsen as the population increases, which is expected to reach 220 million by 2025. Based on current trends it is likely that per capita water availability will decline to around 800 m<sup>3</sup> by 2025, which will make Pakistan a water scarce country.

Under the visible influence of climate change, temperatures have increased in the high-mountain region of Pakistan during the last 30 years. According to the experts at Pakistan Meteorological Department, due to rising temperature the glaciers have been losing their ice mass at a faster rate than ever before. This has already ignited natural disasters like floods and drought in Pakistan.

The experts have pointed out that the critical role of water in Pakistan’s sustainable development, food security, human health and daily life has not been fully appreciated in the national development plans, nor has its value as a scarce natural resource and economic good been properly recognized. As a result, the conservation and management of water resources is not adequately taken care to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Effective development and management of the country’s water resources therefore are vital to Pakistan's overall economic development, food security and health of its population.

In the light of above, an International Conference on World Water Day 2015 has been planned in Islamabad, Pakistan on 24<sup>th</sup> of March 2015 (Tuesday) by the development partners including UNESCO Islamabad, Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR), Economic Cooperation Organization Science Foundation (ECOSF), World Youth Parliament of Water



(WYPW), International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Asian Development Bank (ADB), UNDP, UNICEF, Plan International, Muslim Aid & Pakistan Water Partnership (PWP), under patronage of the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform, Government of Pakistan.

## **Objectives**

The objectives of the conference include:

- Identify ways how water can be used for sustainable development of Pakistan.
- Persuading the Government of Pakistan in finalization of the National Water Policy.
- Engaging youth, gender, business, government, civil society, academia and media for awareness and advocacy for integrated water resource development and management to attain sustainable development in the country.

## **Methodology**

The Conference will achieve the above objectives by;

- Analyzing and evaluating the existing use of tools and the main challenges in water sector of Pakistan;
- Providing a platform for exchange of experiences and dialogue: inter-disciplinary, inter-scale, and inter-generational between the academia, international organizations, NGOs, public and private sectors;
- Drawing conclusions on lessons from existing experience and the way forward for the implementation.

## **Intended Participants**

Around one hundred, middle to top management cadre, water related experts, stakeholders and youth from institutions at the national and provincial levels will be selected in consultation with the collaborating partners.

## **Format of the Conference**

The programme will be observed through presentations, panel and group discussions, etc.

## **Expected outcomes**

- A consensus ‘Islamabad Water Day Declaration’ highlighting importance of water for sustainable development in Pakistan and role of different institutions; expedition of the National Water Policy’s approval by the Government; role of youth in the sustainable water resource management, and synthesis of discussion from the technical sessions of the conference.
- Learning and knowledge exchange among Conference participants through interdisciplinary discussions.
- A conference report.