

# ADVANCE BRIEFING

*GWP's strategic position as it prepares for its next strategy period beginning in 2020*



## GWP's alignment with the global development agenda

GWP long advocated for the incorporation of integrated water resources management (IWRM) into the global development agenda, as key to achieving water security. In 2015, three landmark agreements of critical significance to water security were adopted:

- the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- the Paris Agreement on Climate
- the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction



### The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

In the run-up to the adoption of the SDGs, the United Nations Secretary General called for the voices of local stakeholders to be heard at the global level. In response, GWP convened country-level consultations in 2013 and 2014, at which 2,200 participants from 40 countries gave their views on prioritising water. GWP also campaigned for a dedicated water goal that placed IWRM principles at the core of achieving water security.

The inclusion of a specific Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on water (SDG 6) and a related target (6.5.1) within the 2030 Agenda was celebrated by GWP as a major milestone.



Integrated water resources management is the foundation on which all the SDG 6 targets and the broader water-related goals can be met: for food, health, energy, jobs, poverty eradication, climate recovery, education, ecosystems, etc. As a result, GWP's programme incorporates activities in the areas of urban water, transboundary waters, and the water-food-energy-ecosystem nexus.



SDG 17, which calls for "multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources", is in perfect alignment with GWP's 21-year global action network. The network uses its convening power and deep technical expertise to bring water users together to solve water problems.



### The Paris Agreement

Water management is not only vital for achieving the SDGs, it is also at the heart of climate action. Under the Paris Agreement countries are requested to outline their climate actions through Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). More than ninety percent of adaptation commitments in NDCs include water-related actions, **making water the most-cited priority sector**. GWP is actively working with countries to support the water-related components of their NDCs and National Adaptation Plans.



### The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

With water-related disasters such as floods and droughts accounting for almost 90 per cent of the 1,000 most disastrous events since 1990, it is clear that water resources management is critical to effective disaster reduction and resilience. GWP's activities are closely aligned to the targets of the Sendai Framework and have supported climate resilience in vulnerable communities.

Historically aligned with the main goals of the global development agenda, GWP operates at their intersection: delivering **sustainable water management** (SDG 6) through a **multi-stakeholder partnership** (SDG 17) that supports national and regional actors to deliver on their **global climate commitments** and which furthers **disaster risk reduction and resilience**.

## The GWP approach

### Multi-stakeholder partnership + Knowledge = Changes to policies and practice

To bring about large scale transformational change to water management, GWP's starting point is its on-the-ground network of civil society, government, and business which, acting together, has the power to solve water-related issues. The network creates and applies its knowledge to translate science into policy and practice. This has been GWP's theory of change from the beginning.

Today, this diverse partnership – of more than 3,000 organizations in over 180 countries structured around 13 regional and 60 country water partnerships – is a strong, politically neutral platform for policy dialogue and bottom-up development of action plans and programmes.

Deeply embedded in national priorities and processes, **this multi-stakeholder partnership is a sought-after asset to help countries accelerate the achievement of water-related sustainable development and climate resilient goals**, and managing trade-offs across geographic scales and sectoral interests.

#### Multi-stakeholder partnership for agenda setting...



In 2017, UN Environment, the custodian agency of the SDG 6.5.1 indicator (which measures the degree of IWRM implementation), asked GWP to convene more than 30 workshops to collect country data. The output of these workshops form part of the baseline data included in UN-Water's SDG 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation, which is itself an input into the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in July 2018. The workshops highlighted national priority areas for IWRM, which will now be used by GWP and its partners to develop interventions to advance SDG 6.

That same year, the High Level Panel on Water (HLPW) – an initiative of the UN Secretary-General and the World Bank Group President – asked GWP to convene consultations to gather input from a wide variety of stakeholders (including NGOs, indigenous peoples, faith-based groups, government, women, youth and the private sector), for its Valuing Water Initiative. These consultations addressed the multiple values of water including its cultural, spiritual, and environmental dimensions as well as its economic value and pricing. Participants' views were incorporated into the Valuing Water document which informed the HLPW's recommended actions.



#### ...and from agenda setting to national action

One of the first initiatives of GWP's 'Water, Climate and Development Programme' (launched in response to the African Union's call for countries to build resilience to climate change and water resources variability) was to develop the Water Supplement to the UNFCCC's Technical Guidelines for developing National Adaptation Plans, which were disseminated among least developed countries to enable water sector adaptation planning. This technical expertise not only influenced the global climate agenda but also allowed GWP to enable countries to address knowledge and capacity gaps: helping countries to develop their National Adaptation Planning (NAPs) frameworks. GWP is supporting the development and implementation of NAPs and the outlining and delivery of NDCs in several countries, including Cameroon, Zambia, Kenya, Uganda, and Nepal.

These examples demonstrate that GWP can quickly deploy its network so that local realities inform global processes and vice-versa, making GWP a multi-stakeholder partnership of choice to accelerate climate and development goals by applying an integrated approach to water resources management.



## The GWP priority areas

Every person, economy, and ecosystem depends on water, yet it is often taken for granted, overused, abused, and poorly managed. This results in a situation of water insecurity that keeps millions of people in poverty, hampers human development and is a drag on economic growth.

Ineffective water resources management is estimated to cost the global economy USD 500 billion annually and, factoring in the additional environmental impacts, 1 percent or more of global gross domestic product<sup>1</sup>.

Water insecurity also undermines stability, with water-related crises being ranked among the top 10 global risks for several years according to the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report.

At the heart of the water crisis is the way water resources are managed and governed. Thus, the key aspect of GWP's work is **ensuring good water governance** through the creation of enabling environments for improved water management.

Since the start of the current strategy period in 2014, GWP has influenced more than 170 key water governance outcomes at the basin, country, and regional levels. These outcomes include policies and laws, investment plans and strategies, strengthened institutions that are transparent, inclusive and integrated across sectors, and additional financing.

Working closely with mandated institutions, GWP's climate programme (which includes the GWP-World Meteorological Organisation drought and flood programmes) directly helped secure nearly EUR 20 million in climate financing for vulnerable communities in Africa. The implementation of these investment plans has the potential to protect nearly 74 million people from water crises. In total, we estimate that the plans, strategies, and initiatives supported by GWP since 2014 have influenced water-related investments of more than €1bn<sup>2</sup>.

It is an **enabling environment of good governance** which makes investments sustainable. This includes: cross-sector cooperation, informed stakeholders, competent institutions, transparent decision-making, benefit-sharing, good policies and laws, and an ability to identify and develop bankable projects – what GWP has been delivering for 20-plus years.

<sup>1</sup> GWP and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Securing Water, Sustaining Growth (2015).

<sup>2</sup> This figure combines investments which GWP has a) directly catalysed (i.e. through the preparation of investment plans and bankable projects) and b) indirectly guided (i.e. the allocation of national/ODA water security budgets through GWP-supported governance plans and strategies).



# GWP's 2020 Strategy

In 2018, GWP begins its transition to a new strategy period that starts in 2020. The transition begins with an external evaluation followed closely by actively gathering input from the network and other key stakeholders that will inform early drafts of the strategy. A final strategy is expected to be adopted at the GWP Network Meeting in May 2019.

In full synergy with the global community's development and climate agendas, GWP offers a compelling comparative advantage:

*an inclusive multi-stakeholder partnership with convening power that contributes to agenda-setting, and mobilising knowledge, expertise, political will, financing, and programme implementation for long-term and large-scale transformation of water management across sectors.*

During the current strategy (2014-19), several initiatives have surfaced which will inform the new strategy:

- strengthening national capacity for delivery of results
- engaging GWP Partners to improve network vibrancy
- accessing climate finance and supporting countries in their climate resilience goals
- catalysing youth engagement and gender equality for greater impact on water management
- offering the private sector concrete solutions to connect water stewardship initiatives within IWRM frameworks, and further unlock private sector water action

Later in 2018, GWP will publish a strategy 'update' that will expand on the above initiatives as well as elaborate new directions, based on consultation with the network.

Going from *economic growth to sustainable development* is the political imperative of our time. To do that leaders must deliver on water security, the cornerstone of human health and sustainable growth. Water risks are currently a barrier to that growth. GWP is committed to making water an enabler.

## Join us in promoting partnerships for good water governance



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