

Framework for Action:

Responding to the Forum



***Report reflecting on the
Framework for Action
presented at the
Second World Water Forum March 2000***

Framework for Action: Responding to the Forum
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Framework for Action: Responding to the Forum, has been prepared by the Global Water Partnership to follow up discussions at the Second World Water Forum, The Hague, on 17 to 22 March 2000. It presents a reflection on the Framework for Action, one of the major documents presented at the Forum. This report gathers together the views of many participants at the Forum as well as views expressed during a consultation carried out in the summer of 2000. The Framework for Action gives a 'framework' that others can use to develop actions appropriate to their circumstances and this report provides a platform for further discussion on difficult issues as well as providing ideas for action. Following a brief overview of the Forum, the report presents responses on substance and on process with a final section looking to the future.

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Framework for Action: **Responding to the Forum**

December 2000

Foreword

The Second World Water Forum in The Hague in March 2000 was a major international event that served to move water up the political agenda. There were many outputs from the Forum that were capped by two global documents, the Vision and the Framework for Action. The latter, *Towards Water Security: A Framework for Action*, was prepared by the Global Water Partnership (GWP) and states:

“As the name suggests the Framework for Action provides a basis on which future action can be built. It is for debate and discussion and represents the starting point of a long term programme of concerted actions to transform the present unsustainable water scenario into the water future everyone wants.”

The Framework for Action was launched at the Forum with the aim of setting a course – as a framework not a master plan. Hopefully, it will build awareness in the regions and countries and provide them with choices for action that they can adopt and adapt for improving their water resources development and management. It provided a stimulus for strong debate and discussion at the Forum and although there were many areas of consensus, inevitably there were also areas of contention. It was considered important to capture both the common and differing views and to reflect the Forum participants’ responses to the Framework for Action. As patron of the Global Water Partnership I accepted the need for a post Hague report in my closing speech at the Forum. GWP responded positively to this and I am pleased to submit their document to you as fulfilment of my commitment.

Clearly, just as the Framework for Action was only one of the Forum outputs, so this document is only part of the process for moving forward from Vision to Action. The report is forward looking and the consultation indicated a very high degree of consensus on the main messages in the Framework for Action and I am greatly encouraged by the examples of initiatives that are already being taken to move forward to action.

I am deeply heartened and encouraged that the lively and dynamic spirit of the Forum continues with many stakeholders making commitments to put the Vision into action – thus taking the first steps towards water security.

HRH The Prince of Orange

*Chairman of the Second World Water Forum
and Patron of the Global Water Partnership*

Preface by Margaret Catley-Carlson

There are many Conferences, and as many Conference resolutions and declarations. All of us wanted the Hague Forum on water to be different. We wanted the points of consensus reached at the Forum, together with a plan for continuing to work through the unresolved issues, articulated into an action plan which would engage the international community now and in the future. As the new Chair of the Global Water Partnership (GWP) I am pleased to present this post-Hague report reflecting on the Framework for Action Report, as promised at the Forum. It is now up to all of us to act.

We have tried to capture different responses to the Forum. Even where there is agreement on modalities, there are necessarily different views on the best approach or the most important priorities for action; these are often specific to different regions. It is unrealistic to expect that such differences can be resolved in one report or at one international event. We are engaged on a daring journey through a long-term process.

The frank exchanges at and since the Forum, openly expressing valid concerns and sharp differences, is a breath of fresh air for water-related debates. So is the overall willingness by many and varied interest groups to work to overcome such differences. We should not even try to paper over real differences. We should, however, and have, set out the range of views and perspectives and have suggested mechanisms for resolving different approaches.

The Hague Forum generated tremendous good will. In part this was due to the foresight and drive of the World Water Council, the excellent arrangements by the Netherlands Government, and the dynamic leadership role played by our patron, HRH the Prince of Orange. The intellectual leadership provided by the Vision under the leadership of another of our patrons, former GWP Chair Ismail Serageldin, was also key.

This document has been prepared based on comments made at the Forum and material received following a post-Forum consultation via contacts with all the main groups involved in the preparation of the many Vision sessions. A constructive response was received and many views expressed have been included verbatim although longer texts have been edited to keep the document short. The GWP would like to thank all those who contributed and invite them and others to continue this constructive debate.

There are practical limitations to consultation and we accept that the process is not perfect. UNED, WaterAid and Tearfund have compiled together comments from the NGO Working Group session at the Forum, and since, gathered by UNED during the post-Hague consultation. Workshops at the GWP Consultative Group meeting in Stockholm in August 2000 also enabled contributions from over 250 participants from diverse backgrounds. We thank them and our Framework for Action team, Alan Hall and his colleagues, who have continued their dedicated work in this volume.

The various consultations and discussions highlighted some issues for further debate and set out priorities for follow-up actions. It also demonstrated that there is a high degree of agreement on principles and a desire to move forward to look more at how to do things rather than what to do. We are committed to develop practical means of moving forward both on questions of substance and on processes as we set out on the long process towards achieving water security.

Margaret Catley-Carlson

Chair, Global Water Partnership

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Acronyms

ACC/SWR	UN Administrative Co-ordination Committee – Sub-committee on Water Resources
CEO	Chief Executive Officers
CNN	Cable News Network
DFID	UK Department for International Development
ECEL	European Council of Environmental Law
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organisation
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GWP	Global Water Partnership
ICID	International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage
ICLEI	International Council for Local Environment Initiatives
INBO	International Network of Basin Organisations
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
IWMI	International Water Management Institute
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RBO	River Basin Organisations
TEC	GWP Technical Committee
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNED	United Nations Environment and Development Forum (part of the UN Association)
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
WMO	UN World Meteorological Organisation
WSSCC	Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council
WWC	World Water Council
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

A Moving Water up the Political Agenda

Overview of the Forum

From 17–22 March 2000, more than 5500 people, including international water specialists, politicians, officials and journalists from across the globe convened in The Hague for the Second World Water Forum and Ministerial Conference. It was one of the most diverse and potentially influential water-related meetings of recent times. The Forum was a huge event with almost one hundred sessions and many parallel events and *ad hoc* side-meetings. It also had a strong cultural programme that brought water closer to our every day life. Coverage of the Forum was widely reported in the world's media, including leading editorials in the New York Times, The Financial Times and The Economist as well as coverage by CNN and other TV stations. Altogether the Vision Management Unit collected four volumes of press cuttings.

The Forum and the Ministerial Conference, which was attended by over one hundred ministers, served as important events in moving water up the political agenda. The Vision exercise prepared for the Forum engaged many thousands of people from around the world and mobilised people and resources to an extent not previously seen in the water domain. Apart from the extensive media coverage, the Forum generated significant involvement and debate among a broad range of actors including communities, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Trade Unions, Governments, and others.

The Forum introduced the concept of 'water security' as the central goal for future action and this term captures the complex concept of holistic water management and the balance between resource protection and resource use. It has been accepted very rapidly as shorthand for all the complexity of the water domain and can be understood intuitively by non-water specialists. The outcomes of the Forum are numerous, ranging from individual pledges to act, through to major donor commitments. There are numerous anecdotal examples of raised awareness: for example, the World Bank is revising its 1993 Water Policy taking into account the Forum outputs, there was a debate in the British Parliament on the UK's involvement at the Forum and its aid programme; the Chinese Ministry of Water Resources carried out a thorough review of the Framework for Action and intend to prepare their own targets for water security. In Africa the Organisation for African Unity, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank held a top-level meeting to discuss the Vision and how they can contribute to its achievement.

The World Water Forum event was established by the World Water Council in Marrakech (1997) and consolidated in The Hague (2000). A third Forum is planned for 2003 in Japan and will continue to build co-operation and exchange knowledge and expertise on global, regional and local water issues. The greatest challenge for the Third World Water Forum will be to keep the momentum and maintain the spirit of the Vision. Similarly, the outputs from the Forum provide a significant contribution to the mainstream United Nations process and the need to act was included in the Declaration of the UN General Assembly Millennium Declaration of September 2000. This Declaration resolves to 'stop the unsustainable exploitation of water resources, by developing water management strategies at the regional, national and local levels.' It also resolves 'to halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of people who are unable to reach, or to afford, safe drinking water'. It thus includes two of the main themes of the Framework for Action but unfortunately the Declaration did not refer to the provision of sanitation and hygiene education.

The Vision and Framework for Action

There were many outputs from the Second World Water Forum, which were capped by two global documents, the Vision and the Framework for Action. The first of these, “*A Water Secure World – Vision for Water, Life, and the Environment in the 21st Century*” was prepared by the World Commission on Water and it was accompanied by a detailed Vision report from the Vision Management Unit entitled “*Making Water Everybody’s Business*”. The Vision presented was provocative, drawing attention to the ‘gloomy arithmetic of water’ and focussing on a set of key messages for a water secure world. These are compiled in the box below.

Messages for a water secure world – World Commission for Water

- A holistic, systemic approach relying on integrated water resources management must replace the current fragmentation in managing water.
- Participatory institutional mechanisms must be put in place to involve all sectors of society in decision-making.
- Fresh water must be recognised as a scarce commodity and managed accordingly.
- Full cost pricing of water services with targeted subsidies for the poor.
- Fresh water must be recognised as a basic need, with adequate access ensured for the poor.
- Incentives for resource mobilisation and technology change are needed.
- Institutional, technological and financial innovation is needed.
- Private investment and community action.
- Political will is needed – going beyond Dublin and Rio.
- Governments are key actors – as enablers and regulators.
- Behavioural change is needed by all – no more business as usual.

The second main output was the Global Water Partnership’s report “*Towards Water Security: A Framework for Action*”. The Framework for Action is based on the Vision and brings together the work of regional groups, sectoral groups and specialist panels. The Framework for Action attempts to integrate these many views by presenting a framework with examples of actions that can be taken at a range of levels – from local to international. It focuses on the steps involved in moving to action and outlines a mechanism for taking forward actions at, or immediately after, the Forum. It is not intended as a blueprint, rather a set of options and/or examples of on-going actions which governments, communities, and others can take and adapt to their local requirements and circumstances. A number of new initiatives are also highlighted in the report, together with suggestions for strengthening some existing initiatives.

Various draft versions of the Framework for Action had been reviewed by many groups involved in the Vision exercise, however, as for all the outputs, the Forum presented the first time that people had the opportunity to assess and review the final version of the Framework for Action in detail. The Framework for Action day, held at the Forum on Tuesday 21st March 2000, centred on a number of sessions broadly related to the structure and content of the report itself, that is: mobilising political will; making water governance effective; generating water wisdom; tackling urgent water priorities; investing for a secure water future; and the way forward. In addition, special workshop sessions were held based on the five priority themes for action, namely: protecting and restoring water resources and ecosystems; achieving water-food security; extending sanitation coverage and hygiene education; meeting the challenge of urbanisation; and improving management of floods.

The day enabled a wide-ranging discussion whereby individuals and organisations alike were able to comment frankly and constructively on the Framework for Action, as well as contributing to the way forward. There was general support for the Framework for Action and for the urgent priorities, with vigorous debate on the best way to tackle the issues and move forward (see Annex 2). However, there were also criticisms. Some felt there was a need for wider debate after the Forum, especially as the preparation period did not enable advanced distribution of the document and others expressed concerns over specific aspects of the report. This prompted the preparation of this follow-up report, which is based on comments made at the Forum and a consultation process from June to September 2000.

The Ministerial Declaration

A Ministerial Conference, held parallel to the Forum, was organised by the Dutch Government with the aim of building on the momentum of the Forum to mobilise official governmental support, thus countering global water predicaments with political action. Although the Forum documents were not formal inputs to the Ministerial Conference, the Ministers *welcomed the Vision and Framework for Action* and the Ministerial Declaration clearly drew inspiration from these and other Forum outputs. At the Ministerial Conference, ministers were divided into working groups to discuss seven key challenges and regional perspectives. The seven key challenges were based on the Vision and Framework for Action. This innovative structure provided a more substantive contribution from the senior government representatives. After discussing the many issues surrounding water security the Ministers agreed a Ministerial Declaration on Water Security in the 21st Century, which is included as Annex 1.

Ministerial Declaration – The key challenges

To achieve water security, we face the following main challenges:

- *Meeting basic needs*: to recognise that access to safe and sufficient water and sanitation are basic human needs and are essential to health and well being, and to empower people, especially women, through a participatory process of water management.
- *Securing the food supply*: to enhance food security, particularly of the poor and vulnerable, through the more efficient mobilisation and use, and the more equitable allocation of water for food production.
- *Protecting ecosystems*: to ensure the integrity of ecosystems through sustainable water resources management.
- *Sharing water resources*: to promote peaceful co-operation and develop synergies between different uses of water at all levels, whenever possible, within and, in the case of boundary and trans-boundary water resources, between states concerned, through sustainable river basin management or other appropriate approaches.
- *Managing risks*: to provide security from floods, droughts, pollution and other water-related hazards.
- *Valuing water*: to manage water in a way that reflects its economic, social, environmental and cultural values for all its uses, and to move towards pricing water services to reflect the cost of their provision. This approach should take account of the need for equity and the basic needs of the poor and the vulnerable.
- *Governing water wisely*: to ensure good governance, so that the involvement of the public and the interests of all stakeholders are included in the management of water resources.

The main challenges identified in the Declaration for achieving water security provided the base for seven separate small group discussions amongst Ministers and heads of delegation. The declaration reflects the awareness of the world's governments and represents a step in the process to provide water security for all. The declaration recognises that there are many processes around the world that can be built on and what is needed is for everyone to work together, to develop collaboration and partnerships, to build a secure and sustainable future.

Four 'major groups' presented statements to the Conference; the private sector represented by a panel of 11 Chief Executive Officers, a gender group, the NGOs and a youth group. It is important to maintain the momentum within the major groups and there are opportunities to develop many of the proposals into concrete actions. In some cases the groups could work together or with others to develop the ideas further.

There was a pledge from the Chief Executive Officers (CEO) panel to work in partnership with the public sector and civil society in improving water service delivery. They pledged to disseminate information on technologies and best practices through a web based information system. There was however some disappointment at the lack of concrete financial commitments from the private sector. The gender group was active throughout the preparation of the Vision outputs and gender ambassadors were present in all Forum sessions. The gender ambassadors called for Ministers to reallocate budgetary resources to community related activities, to establish an inter-ministerial sub-committee on gender to report progress at the next Forum in 2003 and to achieve one-third representation of women in all bodies involved in the further development of the Framework for Action. The youth group proposed numerous ideas for tackling global water problems, including greater investment in education and awareness through youth programmes. An "NGO and major groups statement to the Ministerial Conference" was prepared by 45 NGOs and the trade union Public Sector International. The statement, which was not signed by all NGOs at the Forum, did not accept the Vision and expressed serious concerns about the Framework for Action whilst recognising some positive action points and recommendations.

Issues of concern to those signing the NGO Statement included the need for greater participation and some of the contents relating to full cost pricing and private sector involvement. Some NGOs did not support the "NGO Statement" and supported some, if not all, aspects of these documents – for example many environmental NGOs support pricing. Some NGOs were concerned that the Vision exercise took place outside of the formal UN process whilst others, including many UN agencies, appreciated the value of such an informal, multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder process. The informal process, outside of governmental limitations, provided a useful if not politically binding contribution to better understanding of water resources issues. Clearly there is no single NGO voice and views were as broad inside the NGO community as they were outside and these different NGO views need to be better expressed in future meetings.

There was some disappointment with the Ministerial Declaration. For example, the World Wide Fund for Nature and many developing country participants found it to be full of general statements and good intentions to 'do more' or 'do better' but lacked tangible action and was an opportunity missed. Whilst the Declaration itself may be general, as is the nature of such documents, the Ministerial Conference did provide a valuable opportunity for Ministers and government officials, from both technical and/or aid departments, to discuss controversial issues such as pricing, institutional reforms and transboundary waters in a constructive environment.

Maintaining the momentum

The number of participants at the Second World Water Forum surpassed the expectations of many, including the organisers. But, it is not simply the numbers that made the Forum and Ministerial Conference such a success. The preceding process drew together thousands of stakeholders from across the globe. Previously unsurpassed levels of consultation and debate during the Vision to Action process stand as a testimony to the early beginnings of a water movement and the increasing mobilisation of people and resources.

It is very important that the momentum generated at the Forum and Ministerial Conference is not lost. Through extensive debate and discussion it has become clear that there are many areas of agreement that can be reinforced and taken forward. The pre- and post-Hague processes have generated growing commitment to common goals and action. Pledges in support of these goals were aired at the Forum and continue to be translated into tangible action on the ground by numerous governments, organisations and individuals.

Continued efforts are required to ensure that the growing commitment to averting a water crisis results in effective action and results where it matters most – on the ground. As a consequence, the immediate post-Hague process is critical. Expectations are high and success will require a significant change in the way the water world does business. This brave new water world must reflect reality and real-world situations, not be built on hypotheses and theory. The new challenge is now to involve as many new individuals and organisations in the follow-up process as possible in a continuing thrust to mobilise people and resources. One of the most important issues to put into practice is *integrated water resources management (IWRM)*, as this is the cornerstone of sustainable water and land management and ‘integration’ across sectors and between stakeholders will remain the focus of future GWP activities.

Integrated water resources management is a process

GWP defines IWRM as a process, which promotes the co-ordinated development of water, land and related resources, in order to maximise the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems. The GWP Background Paper No 4 gives a full description of IWRM and has been translated into several languages.

Political will to act on water-related issues was demonstrated by the large-scale agreement achieved during the Ministerial Conference and the commitment of governments to both recognise and act upon the major challenges which lay ahead. The political profile of water should continue to remain on the agenda over the coming years through the UN processes, including the preparations and delivery of the Rio +10 conference in 2002.

As a prerequisite, we must all reflect on the Forum, synthesise and analyse its outcomes, and identify new directions and pathways to take after the Forum. This will identify gaps to be closed and priorities to be undertaken. The following chapters reflect on the FFA and looks at some of the first steps being taken to move forward in the lead up to the Third World Water Forum and other key milestone events.

B Response to the Forum – Questions of Substance

Introduction

The Forum demonstrated that there is consensus on many – but not all – of the messages of the Vision. In some cases there is general agreement on the “ends” but views differ on the means to achieve those ends with some groups holding strong views on specific approaches. As awareness has grown of a water crisis so have the stakes, with water debates entering the normal cut and thrust of politics. This can be seen as one of the positive outcomes of the Forum as water has clearly risen in the hierarchy of political debate. For many countries this is well over due as they struggle to address severe problems of water service provision and resource management.

This does however raise a problem of where to set the boundaries in the follow-up to the Forum. Some of the issues raised have wider development implications that are beyond the scope of the water community, such as globalisation, free markets, human rights and the merits of different political systems. Such responses demonstrate how water is a front line political issue, but, as for other development activities, discussion of such matters will take place in general debates on development in the UN and in the countries themselves. Solutions will depend on the development paradigm chosen by the country. Such general development questions extend beyond the water world and, even though it is accepted that they impact on water, they are not exclusively water-related and cannot be resolved within a water forum.

Synthesis of various comments on water and development

“Water is a key factor in overall national development. An example is the question of debt and the Framework for Action made a good proposal that donors include water within the government spending categories for debt relief money of Highly Indebted Poor Countries. Similarly the Framework for Action calls for more capacity building and increased responsibility for government as enabler and regulators. However, structural adjustment programmes (promoted by donors) make it difficult for governments to carry out such activities. As a consequence, good ideas from the vision and supported by donors are in danger of failing because the same donors are pursuing actions contrary to those needed to support the Vision. It is important that donors re-think their programmes and instead of running down government capacity they should build it up to enable programmes to succeed. Policy makers, with support from donors must also address the issues of corruption and debt more openly and with real commitment, as they are barriers to solving the water crisis. The major leakage in the water sector is not water but money through corruption. This is a difficult issue to tackle but cannot be avoided”.

The aim of this chapter is to set out the principal areas of debate that need to be given more attention in the follow-up to the Forum and to ask how the debate and associated actions can be taken forward. It follows the structure of the Framework for Action and presents many comments received at the Forum and during the post-Hague consultation.

Whilst it is recognised that the search for universal solutions is futile and local conditions will dictate the best approach, it is understood that global dialogue is needed in order to help countries focus on priority issues. Several organisations and individuals have expressed their views on the Vision, Framework for Action and Forum in general and they are wide ranging.

Issues are often stated starkly in “either-or” terms whereas most practical answers involve finding a balance between extremes. There is also considerable misunderstanding or misinformation arising from a lack of time or care in reading the various documents. Therefore, even though the Forum discussions generated strong support for the Vision and Framework for Action and convergence on a number of issues, there were concerns and differences of perspective on others and these are discussed in this chapter. Clearly, such differing perspectives are a natural part of the process, but to reach the shared goal of water security for all it is important to build as strongly as possible on the shared pathways for getting there. Dialogue is better than preaching and the greater the level of consensus surrounding the actions the greater will be the momentum towards achieving shared goals.

Mobilising political will to act

A number of the indicative water security targets need to be further reviewed and amended accordingly – particularly those for food, floods and ecosystems. The notion of ‘water security’, if it is to be an effective common goal, needs to be explicitly reflected in the targets chosen.

An issue that is often raised is the concept of ‘water as a human right’. This issue is of particular concern to those engaged in the provision of basic-needs drinking water for the poor. It raises other questions for example on responsibilities and how the concept of “human right” equates with charging for water services and how far this right extends for example for agricultural water use.

Comments made on human rights and responsibilities

The ad hoc NGO working group expressed the need for more work and political debate on the right of access to water. “The implications of advancing ‘a rights based approach’ should be examined for governments and international co-operation and on consumption patterns. This has implications much wider than the water sector and implies an adjustment of societal power relations”. The Green Cross proposes “the basic entitlement to enough clean water to allow a healthy and dignified lifestyle is a fundamental human right, enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights”.

As many international conventions already include the right to basic needs drinking water, the issue is mainly one for government law makers (for example, South Africa has included this in its new Water Law). The European Council of Environmental Law (ECEL) has recently examined this issue and has concluded that such a right is a corollary to existing human rights and there is no need to create a *new* human right to water. ECEL does however concede that there is a need to better define the content of the right to water in order to foster its practical implementation, in particular in those countries in which most people already have access to drinking water. ECEL has prepared a resolution in order to summarise its views on the content of the right to water at an affordable price. It has recently called for comments on its resolution and this might serve as a suitable forum to debate this issue.

Another prominent issue was how the environment should be treated. The Framework for Action showed a diagram with the resource being balanced by livelihoods as a demonstration of the need to find a balance between allocating water use for livelihood enhancement and protecting water resources from overexploitation and degradation. Some felt that this and other sections of the Framework for Action misrepresented the environment, which should be considered on the supply side of the equation not the demand side. On the other hand, others felt that the environment is also a ‘user’ as water must be made available for ecosystems, such as fisheries, and in downstream areas this can be seen as a demand that is in competition with other uses.

World Wide Fund for Nature view on how the ‘environment’ is treated

“The environment needs to be clearly placed on the ‘supply side’ of the equation instead of the ‘demand side’ as it is in the existing Framework for Action documents. To protect and conserve the environment, as the primary source of freshwater resources, should be the leading principle for water management. This means maintaining, and restoring where necessary, the natural water cycle and its hydrological dynamics. This basic principle was underscored in the Ministers Declaration of The Hague which recognised that, ‘water resources, and the related ecosystems that provide and sustain them, are under threat from pollution, unsustainable use, land-use changes, climate change and many other forces’.”

This has a direct impact on resource allocation and there are differing views on priorities. There is no contention that providing basic drinking water needs for human beings is the first priority – and the volumes needed are small. However, the next most significant priority raises conflicts and from the environmental perspective maintaining environmental flows and ecosystems is the highest priority. This may not however be the case in poorer countries where meeting basic food needs is also a critical issue. For some there is no conflict, as the proper management of the environment would provide adequate food needs but others refute this claim and more investigation is needed to determine the real extent of this water-food-nature conflict. Overcoming the conflict over allocation, where it exists, is a fundamental aspect of Integrated Water Resources Management as proposed in the Framework for Action and other documents and an important issue for the follow-up process.

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) felt that the focus on putting water higher on the political agenda was not necessarily a major concern as in some key countries such as China and India it is already high on the agenda but with the wrong focus. They felt that the need is to promote more sustainable water management practices using existing technologies, such as water harvesting and soil conservation and felt that the Framework for Action should give more emphasis to such grassroots activities.

Making water governance effective

Putting integrated water resource management into practice

The Commission report calls for a holistic systemic approach on integrated water resource management that replaces the present fragmented, single-sector management. The Framework for Action gives prominence to IWRM in the chapter on Governance. Although people define this term differently there is a general agreement that it is a key aspect of averting a water crisis and it is endorsed in the Ministerial Declaration.

IWRM can be viewed from several levels, all of which are equally important. At the national level it is important to develop policies and laws (the enabling environment) and institutional systems that overcome fragmentation across sectoral ministries. This provides the basic operating conditions and rules for society with respect to water resources management and national planning. As basins are subject to national laws and policies the national level impacts on basin and local level activities. The Framework for Action included this under the section on “strengthening river basin and aquifer management” and some contributors felt that this should have been given greater prominence. It was also felt that the Framework for Action focussed too much on the national perspective and undervalued ecosystems and planning at the basin level that is embodied in the holistic concept of IWRM. The Framework for Action does present the resource as pivotal to both water for social well being and water for economic growth and livelihood enhancement and is thus not *fundamentally* different from that of the Water and Nature Vision.

The World Conservation Union (IUCN) view on National and basinwide water governance

“The Framework for Action and Regional Vision to Action reports should give more emphasis to the need for implementing an ecosystem management approach to water management. Key elements to consider in the follow-up process include the following: how to embrace ecosystem concerns and recognise the intrinsic need to conserve freshwater and related ecosystems as the basis for human security, (the Water and Nature Report provides a detailed description of the action points that need to be taken) and to reflect the notion that ecosystems provide, restore and efficiently deliver the water that humanity requires and their conservation is therefore essential for water security. This contrasts with the notion that they are only in competition with other uses and emphasises that ecosystem goods and services to humanity are not fully valued in conventional water resource planning and pricing schemes, but that this valuation and incorporation is essential to develop sustainability of water resources and their management.”

It might be said that in bringing together the national and basin perspectives, water governance needs to operationalise an ecosystem approach to land and water resources management. This should be undertaken basin-by-basin, with participation by stakeholders within an enabling environment of appropriate national policies, institutional and legal reforms and key investments.

Global Environment Facility's view on basin planning

“The concept of Integrated Water Resources Management should be further developed so it is based on an ecosystem approach which integrates all land and water use decision-making on a basin scale – the basin is a key planning level. Thus basin planning is as important an element of IWRM, as issues such as national policies and laws, pricing reforms and regulation and national institutional issues. The basin provides a means to operationalise cross-sectoral management of land and water resources including ecosystem considerations and enables the participation of key stakeholders who depend on the basin. More emphasis is needed on land use and integrating land and water management at the basin level can help to solve the water crisis. The approaches towards integrating land and water management and the goods and services which ecosystems provide – including their valuation through appropriate research – need further work including studies to determine the trade-offs between different uses of water within a basin. There are discussions underway to formulate actions based on a basin approach”. (Also see part D).

Some Environmental NGOs felt that more debate is needed on water security as a common goal and that a more ecosystem based approach is needed rather than protection of the resource as stated in the Framework for Action. Also, there needs to be a better understanding of the phrase “ecosystem based approach” and what it means in practical terms. Similarly, IWRM is still not well understood or applied and clearly there should be more dialogue to find out how to convert such concepts into reality. Increasing the cross-sectoral dialogue will help with communicating such ideas, as often the same ideas are expressed differently by different sector specialists. Better dissemination of studies and more research is needed on the links between an ecosystems based approach and livelihood security, especially case studies showing practical experience.

Although the Framework for Action raised the issue of groundwater management, some felt that it should be given greater emphasis in the IWRM discussions and more attention in the follow-up process. This should take account of different hydrological and hydrogeological conditions as well as institutional, legal and regulatory implications.

Devolving responsibility to water users

Although there has been tremendous change over the past few years in terms of governance, there is still very little capacity within government entities (departments, political assemblies, local government administrative units) for managing the reforms and their implications. More resources should be channelled to providing local capacity. The NGO Statement called for local community control over water supply and sanitation services and in many countries where effective local capacity exists this is an attractive option. The Framework for Action calls for a pluralistic approach including community management and private sector involvement with enlightened leadership. However, leadership should be developed at community level as well as centrally as enlightened leadership often emerges from the local level.

NGO Working group view on Grassroots action

“IWRM should begin at the local level and a much stronger focus is needed on the management and development of small catchment areas/watersheds. Although included it was felt to be weak in the Framework for Action. Existing examples of micro-level projects from NGOs should be replicated widely with funding agencies providing support for local level IWRM projects and helping to connect micro-level experiences to the macro-level. The Framework for Action highlighted the difficulties of promoting change and some contributors stressed the importance of micro-level activities that engage local people, build capacity and provide a more gradual and participatory model for development. More needs to be done to scale up successful micro-activities and donors should work with NGOs to give this more support”.

Strengthening management of shared waters

The Sovereignty panel felt that their proposals were not well covered in the Framework for Action and Vision. For example, it must be recognised that State sovereignty over shared watercourses is limited by the needs and rights of others, the rights of both upstream and downstream states should be stressed, as should the need for transparency and communication, the no-harm principle, the law of prior notification, and the sovereign rights of peoples. It is essential that the revision of national water laws and the adoption of Clean Water Acts include rules for implementation and regulation. Some NGOs called for more reference to customary law and tradition as they have an important influence in many regions and should be incorporated as part of a wider synthesis of modern ideas with traditional know how. Although the Framework for Action included a short section on this specialised subject, more work is needed at basin and national levels to find local solutions and develop universal principles.

Green Cross view on shared waters

“Solutions for the sharing of specific international watercourses should be proposed, including the creation or strengthening of regional institutions for basin-wide water management. These institutions should be suitably empowered to make decisions regarding the joint management and protection of transboundary basins, and have the necessary financial, administrative and technical means and resources for active implementation. A neutral international “corps” or body should be established for mediation in times of water-related conflict. This international body would also assist countries and regions with conflict prevention and resolution, with the support of the private sector, international institutions and international NGOs”.

Reform and development of institutional frameworks

There is considerable debate over aspects of the reform and development of institutional frameworks. The Framework for Action spoke of the need to strengthen national and local institutions, the management of shared water and river basin and aquifer management. The most controversial issues concern the role of the private sector and the ability of governments to fulfil an enabling role to ensure that private sector participation delivers the necessary water services without jeopardising the ‘public good’ aspects of such services, and without threatening the resource itself.

Views from the NGO working group on Government capacity to regulate the private sector.

“The Framework for Action sets out the role of government as regulator, but there is a lack of regulatory capacity in most countries in which the private sector is being introduced. Governments will need considerably more capacity to carry out the role of regulator and guarantor of the level of services. The capacity of developing countries to enforce regulations is often weak and unlikely to be sufficient to safeguard social and environmental interests. Care is needed before burdening such weak and often undemocratic governments with responsibilities for regulating highly skilled commercial operators”.

“Although there has been tremendous change over the past few years in terms of governance, there is still very little capacity within government for managing the reforms and the implications of the reforms. More resources should be channelled to providing capacity so that countries can create an enabling environment and develop national IWRM policies. Policy makers, with support from donors must address the issues of corruption and debt more openly and with real commitment.”

The Vision and Framework for Action point out the important contribution that the private sector can make in achieving the Vision. This caused considerable debate, which was distorted by the focus on the emotive and ideological aspects of “private sector” or “privatisation” rather than on the essential question of how to best provide efficient water services to consumers. This reaction detracted from the fact that there are real issues, both positive and negative, that must be addressed. For example, there were concerns about the “privatisation of water resources” – even though this was not a recommendation of the Commission or the Framework for Action as both clearly place water resources as a central responsibility of government. Moreover, private companies do not *own* the water they only have contracts to supply it.

Many accept that both the private and the public sector have important roles to play and also that mechanisms are needed to protect the poor. The private sector is already a significant player in many countries and without more domestic and international private sector skills and investment the Vision cannot be achieved. More debate is needed on this to determine ways to help countries benefit from private sector involvement whilst overcoming potential negative impacts for the poor. For example, potential private sector investors and government officials responsible for any reform programme need to engage with community organisations and NGOs in order to design appropriate services for the poor and marginal groups. An essential element in this dialogue is the important regulatory role of government and its capacity to manage large commercial entities. To date most private sector participation is focused on large cities within middle-income developing countries. Donors and the private sector should therefore investigate innovative solutions to enable more involvement in the less developed countries. Although commercial entities will focus on the better off communities they still provide *indirect* benefits to the poor by releasing time and money to enable governments to strengthen other public and community services. On the other hand they may reduce the ability of governments to offer cross-subsidies.

Views from various contributors on public and private provision

“The whole question of public and private provision of water services is not an either/or issue. Rather, it is the incentive system, regulation and performance of water services in the public interest that counts – irrespective of the form or commercial autonomy of the service. There are however indications that incentive systems work better in a corporate structure”. (FAO)

“The post-Hague process should promote the adoption of conditions (institutional and operational) that would direct concession contracts for private and semi-private water supplies to generate additional benefits for poor sections of the population and for the environment. There was criticism of the Framework for Action and other Forum documents to the extent that they appear advocacy documents for greatly increased privatisation of water services. More balance is required – there are examples where private companies perform better than the public sector in delivering water services, but also vice-versa. The main issue is to increase the coverage and efficiency of water services, and responsible private sector involvement is one of the instruments available for achieving this and not an end in itself”. (WWF)

“Regarding the private sector if the principles were followed as outlined in VISION 21 and which are relevant to the other sectors as well, the role of the private sector would be a necessary component of a larger whole, but less prominent than sometimes argued for”. (WSSCC)

Realigning economic and financial practices

Pricing for water services remains controversial. There is still considerable debate on the content and desirability of full cost pricing. The discussion on pricing is sometimes confused, with pricing equated with water markets. Water markets are potential options where these can function effectively but there are very few successful examples. Whilst full cost recovery pricing for provision of water services must make sense to ensure access for all and efficient service delivery, more work is needed to ensure disadvantaged groups do not suffer and that suitable administrative mechanisms are in place to enable effective application of any pricing policies. It is important to realise that however water services are provided, in order to be sustainable, costs must be recovered one way or another – through government provision from taxation, or from tariffs (related to both consumption and income levels) and charges or a combination of both.

The debate concerns the extent to which the full costs should be covered directly from the beneficiaries of water services – or indirectly through the public purse. The importance of direct charging has gained prominence because of the growing understanding that in order to improve delivery of water services more resources are needed and existing resources must be used more efficiently. Prices should take into account externalities, such as environmental costs, so that the full cost of water is understood and governments can design good subsidies to help the poor whilst avoiding subsidies that promote bad water management practices.

The macro and micro economic incentives for more efficient use of water are not always clear and there is a need for a much clearer distinction between the economic valuation of in-situ values and extractive/consumptive values. Water pricing also reflects the *value of water in different uses* – and can be used effectively to reflect value of environmental services, cultural aspects and the social dimension of water as well as the straightforward cost of service delivery. In many areas the pricing of water is less problematic than the mechanism (and added costs) to collect the water charges. It is thus important to shift the debate on pricing towards finding practical ways in which it can be applied in a fair and efficient way.

The FAO pointed out that any debate on pricing should also take cognisance of the differences inherent in service provision for domestic/industrial use and agricultural use. At the Forum the debate focussed on the former and more work is needed to better understand how economic and

financial practices can best be applied to the latter. In December 2000 there is a meeting to discuss a Dialogue on Water, Food and Environmental Security, hosted by IWMI that will attempt to bring together concerned groups to provide an impetus for more understanding in this area.

Views of the NGO Working group on paying for water services

“There is an urgent need for full and open public debate on the socio-economic implications of full cost recovery policies. More research is needed on mechanisms to adequately and in a transparent manner, subsidise a critical level of clean water for the poor. Suitable mechanisms need to be developed for full cost transparency and classification of water price according to quality”.

“Water pricing is both a political and economic process and therefore, the achievement of full cost recovery is dependent on factors that are beyond the sole control of the utility and relate to the local socio-economic context (e.g. riots in Cochabamba over water price hikes). More appropriate willingness to pay techniques, which clearly relate to ability to pay need to be developed with economists conducting research in conjunction with community organisations and NGOs at local level”.

Generating water wisdom

Scientific knowledge, awareness raising, sharing knowledge and South-South discourse were all central to the Framework for Action concept of generating water wisdom. Specific comments highlight aspects of water wisdom. This is not an area of significant controversy but many contributors raised it, as there is frustration at the lack of action to match the generally agreed principles. How can more resources be channelled to capacity building, as this must be a forerunner to achieving good governance and reforming governments to become enlightened enablers and regulators?

Views of the NGO Working group on building local capacity

“The Framework for Action needs to give more emphasis on the South sharing their knowledge/wisdom with others in the South and with the North. There must be a dialogue between the two otherwise there will be no sense of ownership. Water wisdom cannot be generated through a top-down approach. This means that it will have to be more varied and diverse and take longer than some would like but it should be more successful. Part of generating and sharing water wisdom will be encouraging community based organisations and local NGOs to carry out their own research and analysis. Capacity building of NGOs will be an important precursor to this stage “.

“In order for a water wisdom movement to be generated there needs to be a specific way of capturing and sharing the large amounts of knowledge that exists. To avoid reinventing the wheel and to benefit from experience more investment is needed to examine past initiatives and projects to see what was successful/unsuccessful and learn lessons from real case studies. One idea in its infancy is to establish a knowledge bank where water wisdom can be stored so it is easily accessible to everybody. This could be national, regional or global. There should be a more realistic look at the role of the internet and information technology as it is costly and there is still a lack of capacity and hardware and unreliable phone connections in most developing countries”.

Comment on gender and capacity building

“Population pressure is the overwhelming problem in South Asia and it is necessary to link the population issue, gender mainstreaming and water programmes as they are all interconnected.. Reproductive health and community health specialists should be included in water programmes and more intensive capacity building efforts made for women as their participation can make a real difference to meeting these linked challenges. One constraint is that gender issues are unfortunately seen as an aspect of western driven feminism and South Asian women, and men, must work to overcome this constraint”

K Athukorala, Sri Lanka

To overcome entrenched opinions and increase confidence in new or controversial approaches, it is important that rhetoric is replaced by evidence based knowledge. Evidence should be collected to demonstrate that appropriate implementation mechanisms are being adopted and that these are relevant to local economic, social and political conditions. Case studies should be carried out and experiences gathered to show the conditions under which different institutional arrangements and management tools are being applied. More case studies should be carried out to generate good practices and evidence of success measured not simply in economic terms – but taking into consideration the social, political and environmental consequences. Lessons and benefits could be derived from examples of good practice but they are not yet adequately recorded. More in-depth studies are needed at basin level to understand the specific trade-offs needed as win-win solutions may not always be possible.

Comment on rhetoric and reality

“The Vision processes seek to place water firmly in the arena of international development concerns and this is only to be applauded. However, the global statements and visions concerning water tend to have a normative and prescriptive character. Many of the arguments and prescriptive claims contain little or no supporting evidence. There is a need for greater pluralism in the debates. Global debates have tended to draw on rather vague political, economic or theoretical assumptions rather than on empirically grounded facts and realities. More research is needed to map out the mismatch between rhetoric and reality.”

L Mehta/Institute of Development Studies

There is pressure to focus on getting the institutional and policy levels right but recently this has meant that technical, scientific and other studies have been downgraded. Some contributors were concerned that the importance of good data and scholarly objectivity are now given less importance as a basis for decision making. As water becomes more political, the risk is that the debate becomes less informed. There is a need for a knowledge bank of water wisdom to help transfer information on the science and technology of water management. For this knowledge bank to be of value it must be based on reliable data. Such knowledge and data banks would help to generate innovations and success stories for South-South transfer and not only northern-based solutions.

Various views on promoting research, development and demonstration

“Technological research on sanitation should include evaluation and investment in existing models of low-cost sanitation that have been researched and are commercially in operation rather than reinventing the wheel”. (NGO working group)

“More research is needed on the effects of climate change and variability on the water sector so we can agree what to do about it. This important issue was given only a small mention in the Framework for Action”. (From J. Lane, UK)

“Technological improvements are important in addition to structural reforms. It is less clear what the sources of technological development should be. Some argue that 95% of the technology needed to solve present days water problem is already available in the public domain and the rest will be provided by the private sector in response to demand. If that is correct what is the role of public research institutions and of technology research in particular? A related problem is how to accelerate transfer and uptake of technology”. (FAO)

“Science, including physical, economic, political and social science, when wisely applied, can contribute significantly to saving lives and ensuring sustainable development. Scientific knowledge and the ability to use it is a necessity, not a luxury, and it is cost-effective to promote science and to apply its findings. There are knowledge gaps in many critical areas that are exacerbated by rapid changes in society. Science has a continuing responsibility to society to interpret the facts and provide rational advice on which wise decisions can be based. The scientific community should be more actively involved in public debate and policy making. The indigenous scientific capabilities in developing countries need to be developed so that these countries can manage their own water resources and aquatic environment. There is also a need for increased efforts to collect, store and analyse data – develop data banks – so as to provide the scientific and decision making communities with the critical information that is needed to address water problems”. (WMO)

Tackling urgent water priorities

Sectoral strands (Water for People, Water for Food and Rural Development, Water and Nature and Water in Rivers) should be brought together more in the follow-up process in order to reconcile different approaches. This has significant ideological and political implications that will be resolved mostly at the local level and the aim here will be to set out the debate and a mechanism for helping countries to overcome and resolve sectoral conflicts.

In many cases the perspectives of each sector are profoundly different; and the challenge of the future is to enable integration – a difficult concept. The lack of integration of water resources conflict has brought us to the ‘looming water crisis’ and the challenge is to build initiatives that can overcome not only vested interests but also sectorally based ways of thinking. Also, the sectors need to give greater credence to the voices from the regions; for example many of the latter stressed concern over water quality degradation but this was very weak in the sector visions.

FAO views on sectoral realities

“The vested interests in sectoral water-related activities are often so high that cross-sectoral integration has proved very difficult to implement – even when appropriate policies and legislative frameworks are in place. Trying to promote IWRM across administrative and jurisdictional boundaries also presents significant barriers. The distinction between the water resource base and the set of water-related services is fundamental yet it is often over-looked. In most cases issues, such as ‘water scarcity,’ relate either to management and allocation of the resource base or the management and allocation of value-added water services. In other words, there is a fundamental difference between economic and physical water scarcity. Most African countries are economically water scarce. This issue requires further study and debate in the follow-up process”.

The Framework for Action draws attention to the linkages between the five urgent priorities. Pollution and environmental degradation cause water scarcity as they reduce the availability of clean safe water. Human wastes are as damaging in many surface waters as industrial effluents. Water pollution abatement is a much-neglected area of water resources management and more information is needed to demonstrate the real costs of this neglect. Ecosystems downstream are threatened by poor water quality, aquifers are over exploited by cities and farms alike, and deforestation and soil erosion from poor water catchment management practices increases the risk of both drought and flood. The challenge is to establish the working mechanisms – through IWRM – that enable policy makers and decision-makers to see the links and integrate planning. But that will take time and in the meantime urgent action is needed at different levels.

The priority themes for action also served as the central themes for a series of working sessions during the Framework for Action Day at the Forum. Participants at these sessions pooled their knowledge and experience to brainstorm actions and mechanisms for addressing these pressing needs. Annex 2 provides a succinct summary of the outcomes from these sessions and some suggestions are reflected in the relevant sections below.

Protecting and restoring water resources and ecosystems:

Several regional Vision to Action reports stressed the problem of water quality and pollution. This was included in the Framework for Action but was weak in the sector visions. Most comments received relate to conservation rather than protection from degradation. One contributor did however link pollution to the current model of economic development and suggested lifestyle changes and social engineering as the way forward rather than technological solutions. The NGO Statement at The Hague called for a “restoration agenda” for the rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems. This may be ideal and could bring local benefits fairly rapidly, however, on a larger scale it will take a long time to register real benefits. There are also many differing views on the model for development. In the shorter term, the next 25 years, it is important to take measures to improve quality and protect water resources from pollution and this carries an enormous cost. This was not sufficiently prominent in The Hague.

Others have expressed equal concern that resolving groundwater depletion and contamination lacks emphasis as it has the potential to become a major social and environmental tragedy in some areas.

Views on protecting water resources

“Policies for water should be linked to the UN Conventions on Bio-diversity and Desertification. This could form part of the Rio +10 process, to make connections between the different chapters of Agenda 21. In many regions standards could be monitored by indicator aquatic species identifiable by local people. The achievement of the targets would therefore be visible at the community level, which is good for participation and also monitoring. Also, more stress is needed to prevent the pollution of surface waters from agro-chemicals and other sources, which is a major constraint to food security”. (NGO Working group)

“Agriculture has a key responsibility in minimising the impacts of raw water abstraction and return flows to both watercourses and aquifers in order to maintain the set of environmental services upon which other sectoral productivity depends. There is an economic imperative here, not just a case of maintaining environmental ‘requirements’ or so-called ‘demands’, and agricultural policy will have to incorporate a commitment to environmental regulation as much as any other sectoral activity”. (FAO)

Some contributors were concerned that the discussion appears to be too much ‘quantity-oriented’ and not enough ‘quality-oriented’. Water quality is linked to many related issues that impact on resource management such as pollution control, water and waste water treatment (urban & rural), sanitation & public health, irrigation drainage water, water recycling and re-use (industrial), treated water re-use in agriculture, use of different water qualities for different uses. As freshwater refers to all non-seawater it should not apply only to clean water. Furthermore the interdependencies between freshwater and ‘other water’, namely seawater and brackish water will – at least in some regions – become increasingly important, as desalination technologies develop and become competitive. The follow-up to the Framework for Action should thus give more attention to water quality and non-freshwater sources that may facilitate the creation of new freshwater.

WWF view on mainstreaming environmental concerns

“The follow-up to the Forum should include setting up programmes to start mainstreaming environmental issues into water resources management and to increase the conservation of natural ecosystems that are vital elements of a properly functioning hydrological cycle. Also, the wider use of sustainable water management practices and technologies should be promoted in order to make rivers safe for all functions; shift dependence from large scale irrigated agriculture; manage the demand for water resources; promote renewable energy and avoid flood damages”.

Achieving water-food security

Water for food production is a major issue and if less water were used by irrigation then problems of scarcity would be eased. Conversely, modelling by the Vision team shows that additional land and water (and storage) will be needed to feed growing populations. This is a major issue that was not sufficiently prominent at the Forum and, for example, few NGOs expressed any concern over the water-food dichotomy. Moreover, discussions on pricing and private sector involvement were centred on domestic water supply and different criteria will need to be examined for irrigated agriculture. The lack of profile for this key issue may be because it traditionally falls into the agricultural sector and agricultural experts need to be included in any cross-sectoral debate on water-food security.

Trade in agricultural products should be given more emphasis, and the need for more consideration for fair trade was included as a major concern in the NGO Statement. The issue of subsidy distortions must be addressed. With developed countries (OECD) subsidies at about US\$20 billion, less developed countries simply cannot compete. It is estimated that consumers could save US\$60 billion if there was a freer trade environment. The issue of whether the import of food ‘virtual water’ supports security and more equitable and efficient allocation of water resources remains highly controversial. One contributor felt that the suggestion in the Framework for Action for a Consultative Group to take food trade up the political agenda must consider legitimacy and whose agenda it would follow.

Comments on Water and food security

“Water-food security does not necessarily have to be achieved through food production alone, although for many countries while the production of food may be uneconomic; it may be strategic in providing rural stability and development. Much food production is dependent upon the on-demand, just-in-time character of groundwater, but it is not groundwater reserves that are significant in providing such water security, rather it is groundwater levels. There is considerable uncertainty about the potential production increase of dry farming through improved moisture conservation and water harvesting measures. An objective assessment of the economic feasible potential is required”. (FAO)

“There needs to be much more debate and study on pricing for irrigation. It is not sufficient to translate ideas from domestic water supply pricing to irrigation services. The latter covers vast rural areas with huge volumes of water with no measurement or mechanisms for fee collection. This presents huge challenges and the cost of establishing a cost-recovery mechanism may outweigh the benefits. The International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID) intend to give this issue priority in its forthcoming meetings”. (ICID and C Perry)

“Large cash crop farms, which use vast amounts of irrigation water, need targeting in a different way to medium sized farms and the needs of subsistence farmers will be different again. In scarce areas the water needs of cash crops reduce the availability for others. This leads to conflict and threatens the livelihoods of local subsistence farmers. There are many local practices that will assist in the restoration of water bodies to their original capacity to enhance the irrigated land and also to protect from drought. Farmers should be encouraged to apply soil and water conservation practices, enhance the amount of organic matter in the soil and grow mixed crops to achieve good soil nutrition. The message for farmers is ‘a higher livelihood for every drop of water’. The priority should be that water is used to improve livelihoods; this does not necessarily follow from ‘more crop per drop’. More effort is needed to make agricultural/water efficiencies in countries rather than encourage the import of virtual water, which should be a last resort. Local NGOs are developing expertise in the formation of Water User Associations. This requires the full participation of local farmers/users at all stages of design and management, support by government legislation and capacity and awareness building of all users with the active encouragement and inclusion of women. For example, in Nepal the lack of property rights for women hampered their ability to become members of these associations (NGO Working Group)”.

Extending sanitation coverage and hygiene education

The Framework for Action called for a major focus on sanitation because access has lagged lamentably behind the provision of potable water. There was considerable support for this drive for sanitation although there is still considerable debate on how best to achieve it. Also, much more work is needed to raise awareness of the importance of sanitation or it will remain as the poor relation to drinking water supply. Sanitation must be developed in parallel with domestic supply in order to gain public health benefits and avoid water resources degradation. Unfortunately the

recent UN General Assembly Millennium Declaration, which gave a clear target for drinking water, did not even mention sanitation, thus missing an important opportunity. Some NGOs felt that the Framework for Action recommendation for action that is centred on a social marketing approach should be accompanied by community-based hygiene promotion as a comprehensive policy for achieving behaviour change.

Meeting the challenge of urbanisation

There has been some debate on the priority of different sizes of urban or peri-urban areas but it is important to recognise that urban problems of all scales are urgent and local differences will dictate priorities. Rural/urban shifts will continue to be a strong driver and potentially a growing source of conflict – policies to deal with regulation may require forced movement of people and relocation from slums and rural-urban migration therefore deserves more mention. Local conflicts may be as significant as transboundary problems and the significance of urbanisation as an integrated problem has ramifications wider than water supply and sanitation.

WWF view on integration of rural and urban sector perspectives

“There is a serious need to address how to balance water requirements in urban and rural areas. These will often be incompatible. As large cities grow in the coming decades more water will be transferred from rural areas to urban areas with both social and environmental implications. There has been little attention to the actions arising from this issue since the Forum. Clearly conventional sewerage and wastewater systems are neither affordable nor environmentally sustainable in most of the world’s cities. Innovative solutions are needed, such as introducing ecological sanitation methods. This will require extensive awareness raising to change attitudes and pilot applications to demonstrate the technology before it can be adopted on a large scale.”

Improving the management of floods

The importance of resolving flood problems was given widespread support, although the FAO and others pointed out that more work should be done on extreme events and risk management in general rather than only on floods. The notion that hydrological risk can be managed rather than minimised needs broader acceptance if alternatives to expensive structural solutions to flood management are to be implemented. There are many views on the use of large infrastructural works such as dams and embankments to contain floods. Clearly they reduce flood frequency from smaller flood events but may have no impact on larger floods and could even have detrimental impacts because of a false sense of security in the floodplains. Large dams are particularly contentious and have been the subject of an extensive study by the World Commission on Dams (WCD). The findings from the WCD are discussed further in part D.

Some NGOs felt that more explicit support is needed for the Kyoto protocol. The sixth conference of parties to the climate change convention failed to reach a consensus and negotiations are expected to resume in May 2001. Hopefully detailed mechanisms will then be agreed that will reduce greenhouse gases. Climate change may be a factor in the increasing number of floods in the world and this warrants more investment in research, data collection and analysis and a better understanding of processes so that decisions on flood management can take account of climate change. Climate change and its affects on water resources should thus feature more strongly in the next World Water Forum.

Investing for a secure water future

Assessing investment needs

Estimates of investment needs should be clarified and checked against other sources. The Framework for Action produced the first global estimates of investment needs – a doubling of current levels to some \$180 billion per year in developing countries. Of this, according to GWP, some \$30 billion might be needed for water supply and sanitation. The Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC), however, using different assumptions, estimate only, US\$9 billion per annum. The biggest investments are needed for water for food and municipal wastewater and end of pipe treatment, although the latter could be significantly reduced through pollution prevention and other policy measures including ecological sanitation.

The estimation of investment costs is complex and affected by many variables, including the policy context, choice of technology, future technological advances with their related impact on decreasing unit costs (e.g. desalination) and future levels of demand. A goal of IWRM is to ensure efficiency as well as effectiveness in provision of water investments. The FAO pointed out that it is important to explore all water management options, such as demand management and conjunctive use, before embarking upon new structural investments. There is a need for a follow-up to the work done on estimating financial needs and identifying sources of funds. The focus should be at regional and national level with the assumptions and expectations shown quite explicitly.

Meeting the resource challenges – bridging the gap

This brings the debate back to the role of the private sector and other groups: the private sector including domestic small-scale entrepreneurs is clearly only one source of funds. The balance between different suppliers and the ongoing role for government and municipal corporations should not be underestimated.

Private sector investment extends beyond the water utility companies. For example, non-water companies, when investing in large industrial complexes in developing countries, can be asked to provide water or sanitation services as part of the permits for construction. There are also opportunities through advertising, for example in Sri Lanka, Unilever have coupled soap advertising with a campaign for hygiene education. Such innovative mechanisms must be explored further. The CEO Panel is working on a website for water specialities that would include information on private sector technologies. Other major groups, such as the gender and NGO groups could investigate ways to work with the private sector on such activities.

There has been a gradual increase in development assistance for water related activities in recent years and targeted use of the additional funds could act as a seed for larger investment. The governments also need to target their funds and avoid wasteful investment in shoring up inefficient organisations and provide more support to communities as a catalyst for self-help schemes.

Various views on measures to support financial flows

“The mobilisation of private resources in rural and agricultural production is already significant and will need to be continually enabled. This must not be stifled by onerous limits on rural credit or legislative restrictions on informal markets in water and land. Extension of rural credit is crucial with acceptance of a range of social and community-based collateral. Private transactions in land and water should also be permitted”. (FAO)

“There needs to be recognition that international private sector investments are not the panacea to the financing gap. As the current investment environment stands, the ability of the sector to attract investments is poor due to a number of reasons including low rates of return on investment. These obstacles need to be realistically represented and addressed. The merits of private sector participation needs evaluating objectively on a case-by-case basis. It may be more appropriate to reform the public utility with its wealth of knowledge and experience. The pressure to attract foreign investment may also mean a general lowering of environmental and social standards. Domestic private sector and informal and community/household investments are very significant. Though investment figures for this sector are fragmented, initial indications suggest that their proportions are nearly as large as the international private sector. This comparison should be studied and appreciated. More work is needed to improve the efficiency and sustainability of domestic investment”. (NGO Working group)

“The Framework for Action identifies that most water investments come from governments. The Framework for Action also argues that the key role of government is in providing the regulation and policy framework, not in direct capital investments and maintenance costs. Governments in some areas may be the only investors and providers of any substance – both the local private sector and civil society/NGOs may be small and weak. The Framework for Action should not propose one view but should emphasise the need for locality-specific arrangements. Whilst it is accepted that governments need to focus on producing the enabling environment, this should not be taken to the extreme where they lose all involvement in provision and investment”. (NGO Working group)

Continuing the dialogue

The Forum, email consultations and discussions at the GWP Consultative Group meeting in Stockholm have highlighted some specific issues of substance that need to be addressed in any follow-up process. In some cases there is a need to gather hard information and experience on which to base discussions, for example, on ecosystems management. IWRM is a major thrust of the Framework for Action but more work needs to be done to convert the conceptual work into practical application at both the national and basin level. Often there is a consensus emerging on principles but less so on practices. For example it seems that there is a general view that the private sector has a role to play in the provision of efficient water services, however, there is contention on ‘how’ and ‘how much’ rather than ‘what are the possible safeguards for disadvantaged groups?’ Similarly, how can governments be strengthened to deal with the challenge of working with international corporations with enormous assets and financial experience?

Many of these questions can only be answered at the local level where circumstances will dictate solutions and the follow-up process will need to concentrate more on how to do this. Within the water for food area things are less clear; debates on the links between pricing, farmers' livelihood, farming systems, institutional models, trade and virtual water and food security are less well developed and debates on 'water and food' remain open. Equally robust is the practical trade-offs needed between the food and nature groups to find sustainable solutions for both.

The consultations have highlighted that awareness raising is very important to increase recognition among stakeholders of the true economic as well as social value of water. Local participation, involving the younger generation should also be encouraged. There are many questions that need to be addressed at the country or local level, for example on the appropriateness of present institutional structures for effective management of water resources. Whereas governance is clearly a major issue all over the world there are also other priorities in different regions. In Asia, implementing IWRM, irrigation, groundwater and flood and drought management have been recognised as key issues, whereas in Europe water quality and resource degradation are the main issues. In Africa the key issue raised is providing basic services and improving rural livelihoods for poverty elimination. In the Middle East and North Africa water for food is a politically charged issue, as a means must be found to divert water to other uses without destabilising the fragile social fabric and reduce the livelihoods for millions of poor farmers.

C Response to the Forum – Modifying the approach

Introduction

Clearly, there are many views on the best approach to solve the water crisis and it is unrealistic to expect such different perspectives to be easily reconciled. However, mechanisms must be found to resolve conflicts and reconcile different approaches. The increasing awareness and political will to change, reinforced by the Forum, must be harnessed to overcome differences. The enthusiasm and commitment of many individuals and organisations to the Vision to Action process demonstrates a wealth of support for change but, as always, more must be done and improvements can be made. Response related to process issues has centred on a number of themes, including legitimacy and ownership; effective participation; making use of existing mechanisms; adding value and cross-sectoral integration.

Russian Vision Group on over-coming barriers

“One of the directions in the process for taking the vision to actions process forward is to focus on action implementation. The process for action implementation is not so evident as it seems. There might be some concerns on the importance of some actions among various stakeholders but we also need to better understand barriers to action and better understand the steps and various stakeholders’ interests on the way to action implementation. We also need to have an in-depth view on the process of action implementation otherwise they will remain on paper. For example, in Russia, information technology provides new opportunities for advancing action, but the problem is who controls information and do web sites reflect the true state of the art? Organisations like to provide only positive information about their activities. The Russian Law ‘On Production and Consumption of Waste’ was adopted in 1995 and this regulates waste export and import. The web site of the regulatory body includes the annual report with waste import-export data and gives the impression that Russia did not import harmful dangerous waste. But local experts point out that only about 15% of imported waste is controlled with some ‘transit freight’ remaining in the country. Poor information is thus a barrier to action”.

Legitimacy, ownership and effective participation

There was some concern about the legitimacy and ownership of the Vision and Framework for Action as the Second World Water Forum was outside the UN system, and thus outside the “official” political process. This concern is however misplaced as the “unofficial” or informal process has strengths as well as weaknesses. The Forum enabled stimulating debate without the diplomatic constraints that can make the UN or formal political process so slow and cautious. The World Water Forums also have the advantage of a single focus on water itself, of including non-governmental stakeholders, and of providing an opportunity for senior government officials to interact informally. The Forum thus provided an opportunity for experts and “public opinion” to *influence* the official channels. A combination of formal and informal processes is undoubtedly needed if the overall goal of water security is to be achieved.

Water does not have a natural home inside most governments and, similarly, there is no single home for water within the UN system – this is a major constraint on the ability of the UN system to adequately address water issues. For example, there is no certainty that water issues will be given adequate coverage within processes such as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED/Rio) process as it is one of many environment and development issues, with others, such as bio-diversity, forestry and climate change, possibly taking centre stage. At the UN Commission for Sustainable Development meeting in April 2000 water was not given a high priority despite the impetus provided by the Forum. A link was established between the informal and formal processes by including a Ministerial Conference at The Hague and with the active involvement of UN organisations concerned with water. However, the government representatives involved in the various UN meetings may be from different Ministries than those involved in the Ministerial Conference. The official structure of the UN needs to change so that natural resources management – land and water – is given more prominence within the formal UN mechanism. Meanwhile, the informal Forum process provides a platform to raise water awareness.

The Vision Management Unit pioneered a global participatory approach for The Hague and involved an impressive number of stakeholders, and legitimacy comes through this broad participation. However, there will always be calls for more participation or criticisms of what can never be a perfect process and a clearer understanding is needed of terms such as “participation” and “consultation” when applied to global activities. Preparation of site-specific projects with local level stakeholder participation is undeniably essential for good development, but to what extent can this be applied at a global level? The transaction costs incurred in world-wide participation are very high and the benefits need to be clear. Moreover, the term “participation” can easily become misused or used as a means to discredit valuable work. For example, some single-issue advocacy groups may not be interested in reaching consensus on the broader water security issues and judgements have to be made on the trade-offs that may not satisfy such groups. It is thus important to have realistic goals and accept that there are practical limitations to broad grassroots participation throughout the world – the key is thus to find a realistic balance.

The pre-Hague process drew together a diverse range of groups and individuals who all have a role to play in achieving water security. Whilst concerted efforts were made to be inclusive, transparent and participatory, there nevertheless remain lessons to be learned and improvements to be instigated in future follow-up processes.

Views of the Gender Water Alliance on an inclusive approach

“There may be many initiatives emerging by individuals and organisations who were not very active in the Vision process or the Forum. It is important that this is taken into account and the follow-up process should bring in others to avoid “institutionalising” a small group of sector and other specialists within the vision and Framework for Action process. Many consultations took place outside of the GWP or other structures and it is essential to add these in, if not the documents (Framework for Action, sector visions etc) will have limited involvement. The sector groups should work towards a more integrated approach and if only the sector co-ordinators are involved in the post Hague report process we may miss out on valuable contributions from a wider audience”.

Whilst we should strive for the best there will always be flaws and constraints in any process and this should not be allowed to derail any valid process. Perhaps the biggest constraint in the process so far is not the exclusion of NGOs, some of which are relatively large and were prominent both before and during the Forum, but getting adequate and broad representation from the poorer countries, in what can otherwise easily become a northern dominated process – whether by NGOs or other special interest groups.

Taking this into account, it is vital that practical steps are instigated to achieve an acceptable and effective level of participation by encouraging open dialogues at the regional and local levels. Such dialogues must be inclusive with all stakeholders taking part, which may require financial support for smaller and diverse organisations that have valuable local experience to share. Learning from the Hague processes, this will inevitably mean that the preparatory phase for potential follow-up activities should start as soon as possible to allow more time for greater participation at an earlier stage in the process and be clearly mapped out by an accompanying participation plan.

Some contributions on effective participation

“A major issue raised at the Global Forum was the urgent need for a far higher level of real participation between partners, particularly including those at local levels, and the lack of this in many projects and programmes. The NGO community was particularly strong on this, and the issue was further emphasised among others by Prince Willem Alexander, who told the 115 ministers and other officials that the democratic participation of citizens is the way forward in elaborating and implementing water policies and programmes. In view of the way the Forum was organised there was little opportunity to debate this participation issue more broadly and it should form a key issue in the follow-up process”. (WSSCC)

“Opening the consultative process is difficult in hierarchical societies. Societal change will take time and more capacity building is needed at all levels before more effective participation can be achieved. Moreover, the costs of participation are high for poorer communities, especially for women whose dual role demands an 18-hour working day. To sacrifice their time they must see the participation as meaningful and it must be balanced with other more pressing priorities. Just as for gender tokenism there is a danger of participation tokenism. Ways must be found to make participation meaningful and demonstrate impacts from the participation for example through basin planning and community activities”. (K Athukorala, Sri Lanka)

Participation plans should describe both process and methodology and should contain elements including core partner organisations and their respective roles; a consultation strategy; and a communication strategy. The core partner organisations may take different roles but the value-added lies in the emphasis on partnership and the breadth that this covers. The consultation strategy will serve to improve the quality of proposed outputs and the challenge is to achieve this in a transparent, inclusive and cost-effective way using appropriate forums. Finally, communication strategies should ensure dissemination of information, through a range of media, to a wide spectrum of interested parties ranging from the general public to politicians.

Adding value

The arguments for and against global-level debates and activities are many and varied. Some feel that there is an excessive focus on international meetings and that they are costly, detract from true “action” at the grass-roots level, and do not provide value for money. Others believe that they provide an arena that draws together leading specialists throughout the world and are essential if political and public awareness is to be generated and interest maintained in meeting global communications and sharing experiences and views. Whatever their merits they are likely to continue and it is important to capitalise on them. To do this, the processes and preparations need to be well planned with clear objectives. The quality of these events will be determined by the advance work done in collecting information, carrying out studies and analysing different issues. The follow-up thus has two aspects: support to on-going development that is happening anyway (donor support, UN debate and national debate) and the added value that the Forum and other follow-up activities can bring.

The Vision exercise was very ambitious and raised awareness at many levels. Without such awareness water issues may not get the full attention they require. International, regional, national and local activities all have specific advantages and occasional high profile events are important but they need to be focused and should support regional/national level activities not dominate them. For example, there are several issues of substance (see Part B) that warrant further debate at the international level and the triennial Forum process keeps these issues high on the agenda so that they can translate into practical action at the country level.

Views from the NGO Working group on adding value to international processes

“So far the GWP has not addressed how to link itself with existing initiatives, such as the National Strategies for Sustainable Development, Poverty Reduction Strategies and the UN Commission for Sustainable Development. For integration and efficiency, we urge greater co-ordination of the GWP with national and international programmes, processes and institutions. In this way the GWP might become more accountable. The GWP should lobby for water security to be on the agenda for Rio +10. If the GWP can begin to address ways to discuss and resolve the cross-sectoral conflicts in water use it would be useful for the Bonn meeting, which is seeking to address cross-sectoral linkages in particular. This could also focus on e.g. sustainable small-scale technologies that directly benefit the lives of the poor (e.g. hand pumps, water harvesting) and other environmental issues (energy use etc)”.

Concerns and apprehensions have also been expressed that new structures and organisations are being advocated. It is important that such concerns are rectified immediately to avoid unnecessary tensions, costly overlaps and inconsistencies. Many outcomes of the Forum centre on revising or reinforcing existing courses of action, which are being progressed by established structures and organisations. The need for new structures is therefore not warranted, although new or extended alliances will certainly be of benefit.

Comments on using existing mechanisms

“It is important to use to the maximum existing organisations and meetings (e.g. Stockholm Water Symposium, the Collaborative Council’s Forum and IUCN annual meeting) and even the World Bank’s current water resources policy debate. We should avoid setting up lots of new Groups as it alienates other people and donors”. (J Lane)

“Under its Strategic Framework, FAO will continue to provide member countries and the UN system with substantive expertise, information and analysis to promote water-food security through its multi-disciplinary programming capacity. To this extent, FAOs contribution to the World Water Development Report will be executed by 2002, in time for the Rio +10 preparatory conference in Bonn. The results of The Hague dialogue will be used to refine FAOs Medium Term Plan and develop specific initiatives in the management of hydrological and operational risk for irrigated agriculture, groundwater use in food production and moisture conservation in rainfed agriculture. FAO will assist relevant member countries to develop strategies and approaches to better adjust and prepare for recurrent droughts under the interdisciplinary program “Living with Droughts”. Field level activities on improved water use and conservation will be mainly channelled through FAOs Special Program on Food Security. Improved water control at field level through small-scale irrigation, capacity building and farmer’s field schools is a key component of the programme”. (FAO)

The Forum brought to prominence two relatively new international bodies, the World Water Council and Global Water Partnership. The World Water Council (WWC) as a ‘think-tank’ on water created the World Water Forums in 1997 and they called for the Vision to be developed. The GWP is a partnership and network that has a regional focus, cutting across sectors, with the aim of facilitating the introduction of integrated water resources management throughout the world – with the emphasis on ‘integration’ as the Forum demonstrated how important this is. These small ‘virtual’ organisations provide a means of bringing together people from the whole water community and add value by bringing in those from out of the ‘water box’. Many expressed a wish that these two organisations should merge as it provides another bad example of fragmentation and if this could be achieved before the Third World Water Forum it would demonstrate a commitment to move away from “Business As Usual”. This could begin by establishing shared meetings and conferences related to the Framework for Action and the Japan Forum.

GWPs view of its role in the way forward

In moving forward from The Hague many different players will be involved, all with different roles. There are “primary actors” and “supporting actors”. Primary actors are responsible for preparing policies, strategies and implementing actions. Primary actors include governments, water user groups, the national and international private sector and civil society. The supporting actors are the External Support Agencies, UN agencies, NGOs, GWP, WWC, professional associations and others who provide technical and financial assistance to the primary actors.

The mission that GWP set out to achieve in 1996 – to support countries in the sustainable management of their water resources – has been reinforced by the messages from The Hague Forum. The GWP has recently established a new Comprehensive Work Programme for achieving its mission in the light of new realities and challenges set out in the Framework for Action. The key to success will be to focus the efforts and resources available on a specific set of strategic interventions that make a real difference. GWPs main role will be to assist the national and regional stakeholders to build partnerships and to help to plan and implement ‘actions that work’. This will include the development of experiences and good practices for IWRM. In filling this role effectively, GWP recognises that it is one of several supporting actors and believes in the establishment of alliances and partnerships as the way forward and to overcome barriers to change. The GWP is consolidating its drive for IWRM and will seek to help countries apply this based on real global experiences.

The fact that GWP was asked to prepare the Framework for Action report does not imply that GWP sees itself as the central body responsible for the implementation of actions arising from the Framework for Action. The GWP believes that it can be helpful in the post-Hague period with a similar mandate as before: to move ahead the strategic ideas and to deliver advice in the field of better water resources management through the IWRM approach. GWP will thus focus on strategic IWRM activities, continue its network role to facilitate alliance building across sectors, focus on regions and countries and act as a communicating entity for water matters.

Shifting the emphasis to the regions and countries

Preparations for the Forum were delayed and unfortunately the original sequential process of sectoral studies followed by regional consultation with a close link between the two did not happen – with the sector and regional groups organising separate meetings. There was no time for cross-sectoral dialogue prior to the Forum and many felt that having different sector visions and different regional visions that did not necessarily link together limited the value of the Vision to Action outputs. This resulted in a strong sectoral focus at the Forum, which perhaps belied the importance of holistic and integrated approaches to water resources management. Hence, although the regions provide a focus for potential cross-sectoral dialogue the opportunities created were over-shadowed. The GWP will work to foster more cross-sector dialogue in the follow-up to the Framework for Action.

Two views on improved cross-fertilisation

“During the past year Visions were developed and presented at the Forum. Unfortunately only marginal interactions took place between the major organisations who so much influence the way of working at national and local levels. Fully occupied in their own preparations the representatives of these organisations have had little opportunity, if so desired, to listen to each other and to think through opportunities of strengthening each other’s actions. There is a danger that the consequent state of affairs will be that each group will continue its own programmes – that the Collaborative Council will follow-up Vision 21; that the Water and Nature and Water for Food groups will do the same to their frameworks for action; that the GWP will continue the work it has started, particularly focussing on IWRM; that UN-agencies will continue their approaches and programmes; that with only a few exceptions most donors will do the same; that the NGO community will largely remain at a distance from all of this and continue their own approaches. There is a danger that not much will change since the Global Water Vision was developed”. (WSSCC)

“Though the Vision process was instrumental in allowing sectoral, regional and other group interests and initiatives to be formulated into respective “visions”, the process allowed only marginal cross-fertilisation among the sectors, regions and groups, etc. It was because the individual processes took place simultaneously and the exchange among them in the Water Forum itself was also quite limited.” (Lake Biwa Vision Group)

Considerable effort was put into the sectoral preparations (despite it being generally agreed that it is the regional/country level that matters in action implementation) and some say there was a clear distinction between the quality of the sectoral outputs and those of the regions. This manifests itself as a potential resourcing divide, whereby the former were prepared mostly by “experts” with the support of substantial organisations and networks with access to information gathered over many years, whereas the latter were often small groups with limited access to resources, both financial and human. Similarly, the latter attempted to cover a wide range of sectoral interests. This imbalance was also reflected in The Hague with the sectors managing to solicit support from international figures and their constituencies whilst the regional sessions were less prominent.

The sector versus regional/national debate also accentuates other disparities. Sector groups and other special interest groups can make pronouncements but they have no direct bearing on events in the country and they do not carry any political responsibility. On the other hand, at the regional level there is a closer link to the real political process and the regional groups cannot ignore the government machinery and local impacts.

A further sector-based complication can be that water is still considered by many to be an issue related mainly to domestic water supplies and this often dominates, including at the Forum. For example, the issue of participation was mainly raised by those closely involved in grassroots provision of rural water supplies, the issue of pricing mainly concerned those either for or against paying for domestic water consumption, and the focus on private sector was mainly related to utilities and provision of efficient household service delivery. Participation, pricing and private sector issues did not sufficiently relate to irrigation, environment or to other uses, which have different problems and cannot be equated to water utility issues. The water for people sector focussed mainly on the rural poor even though solving the problems of the urban poor was shown by the Vision to be an increasingly pressing issue.

In the follow-up it is important to move more to regional and national levels, as this is where real change and action must take place. The regional reports are thus important building blocks to developing a more balanced cross-sectoral focus. Opportunities exist to work with others, for

example regional UN offices and local NGOs, to build on the shoots of the existing regional outputs to improve their supporting analyses, and to help them address real conflicts. This will necessarily require greater investment and capacity building support to the regions so they can benefit from the experience of the sector groups, and others, but not be dominated by them.

Views from the GWP regions on moving forward with regional action

“The next steps consist of three main actions within a regional water partnership to *build Partnerships both at regional and national levels*, develop communication strategies, hold a workshop of all the stakeholders and partners, and organise an annual West African Water Forum. Also, we aim to *Facilitate Action-Planning* at regional and national levels through stakeholder dialogues and *support strategic actions* by mapping needs and providers on strategic Assistance and developing Associated Programmes”. (GWP West Africa)

“The linkages between the regional workshops and those conducted by the sectors were weak and this hampered the vision’s objective of out of the box thinking. There were flaws in the representation at consultations for the South Asia vision, for example poor gender balance, imbalance in sector representation and domination of senior people. A wider range of inputs is needed in the follow-up to get a broader perspective – from conservative state officials to radical groups – with a tolerance and respect for different views in order to graduate from business-as-usual to out-of-the-box thinking. (A supplementary regional report has since been prepared to address these weaknesses). In addition, more effort is needed to produce extracts in local languages so the regional visions and framework for action can be marketed to a wider audience”. (Sri Lanka Water Partnership)

Some felt that the regional outputs should have been based on hydrological boundaries. Whilst this has some merits it also raises problems. Water resources policies and decision-making lies mainly with governments not basin organisations (who report to government), also information tends to reside within countries. One solution is to create regional groups comprising countries that share common river basins and water resource challenges – the Nile Basin Region is an example of this. Such regional groups can then be sub-divided according to basins as well as countries.

Processes and milestones

There is no doubt that the global nature of the Vision to Action process culminating at the Second World Water Forum in March 2000 increased the global prominence of water as an issue and raised political awareness. The post-Hague period must try to maintain this awareness and further develop the movement for water security. The Forum was a milestone event that built on others going back to Mar del Plata conference in 1977 and including Dublin and Rio conferences in 1992. There are similar milestone events planned for the near future. These events will help to overcome barriers to action and to generate more investment and maintain pressure on the public and politicians to give water a high priority.

In 2002 the United Nations will debate Agenda 21, ten years after the Rio UNCED meeting. This will report progress on freshwater as just one of many critical issues covered at this meeting. This will be organised by the UN Commission for Sustainable Development and preparations are already starting. As a lead up to Rio +10 the German government will host an international conference on freshwater in December 2001, effectively ten years after Dublin. In 2003 the Third World Water Forum will provide another high profile milestone in the movement towards water security.

There is considerable synergy between the informal Vision process and that of the formal UN process and both strengthen the overall objective of raising water awareness and changing policies towards more efficient water services for all and a more sustainable management of our water resources. It is important that the Forum will provide added impetus to the preparations for the UNCED Rio +10 meeting in 2002.

There are many other international events on the horizon where water will be featured. In addition there will be many regional meetings, such as the fourth Dialogue on freshwater in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2001. A major African Water Forum is also planned for 2001 with the support of the GWP and World Bank. As well as policy oriented meetings such as the third Forum in Japan there are many meetings organised by Professional Associations that have a long tradition of debate on technical innovation such as the XIth World Water Congress of the International Water Association in Madrid in 2003. Such events raise awareness and provide beacons en route to 2025 and can be used to measure progress in achieving water security.

Third World Water Forum

In July 2000, the office of the Preparatory Secretariat of the Third World Water Forum was opened in Tokyo. The Secretariat has a staff of nine under the leadership of the Secretary General, Hideaki Oda. The goal of the Secretariat is for people to share in the foundation of the conference, rather than just attending, and they will be soliciting views and listening to the voices of people throughout the globe. The organisers seek to extend participation in the process of planning and setting up the Forum. This reflects the great awareness of participation and its importance, which was expressed clearly at the Second World Water Forum. The G8 Ministers summit in Japan in 2000 welcomed the work of the World Water Forum and recognised that co-operation in addressing water resource issues can help alleviate regional tensions and contribute to conflict prevention. The Ministers added that they would work together with international organisations such as various UN organisations, including the World Bank, in addressing water resource issues.

Modifying the approach

The mechanisms and processes for resolving issues and carrying forward actions is clearly as important as the substantive issues discussed in the previous chapter. Questions remain on how the follow-up process can ensure the involvement of and a leading role for the regions/countries to ensure that a cross-sectoral approach is integrated into regional activities. There is a call for more participation, which will require organisation and involve time and money. It is also important to agree the appropriate level of participation or consultation in the follow-up at different levels so that it is effective and financially viable. Similarly, it is important for the informal networks such as the GWP to work closely with, but be independent from, the formal UN and governmental process so that their combined forces work for the benefit of water security.

Many of the comments received in the preparation of this report have reflected sectoral interests expressed through advocacy groups and the level of collaboration or co-operation between the sectors is far from that hoped for. Sectoral interests may be in competition – over scarce water supplies, over finances and over influence – at the country or basin level, and common understanding at the international level on different approaches will help to overcome such local competition.

The sector and special interest groups and their well-established and skilled organisations with experience in the international arena should work to assist the regional groups. The latter are less well established and have fewer resources but with more help they could make cross-sectoral debate more meaningful. The regional groups should be strengthened so they can benefit from the experience of the sector groups but not be dominated by them. Similarly, efforts are needed to increase the prominence of developing country experts in the process.

There is plenty to do for all and alliances of existing organisations are the best way forward as each organisation has certain comparative advantages. Business as usual with sectoral fragmentation must be avoided in the follow-up process. These issues were discussed at the GWP Consultative Group meeting in Stockholm, August 2000, where it was concluded that more attention needs to be given to awareness raising, strengthening local level participation, involving the media more positively, increasing stakeholder participation and encouraging transboundary and international dialogue. Annex 3 gives a summary of the outputs from four regionally based working groups.

D Moving Forward from the Forum

Putting Vision into Action

The follow-up process to the Second World Water Forum must capitalise on the Vision exercise and the wave of interest it has generated. The pledges made at and subsequent to the Forum demonstrate amply that commitment to water is growing and will continue to grow. Many pledges and new initiatives are already being translated into concrete resources and actions and some are outlined below. Many of these build on existing commitments whilst others aim to strengthen and reinforce the principles and approaches discussed and agreed during the Forum. This represents a first step in a much longer process of change.

Comment on shared thinking by the Water and Sanitation Collaborative Council

“A most important and necessary next step should now be to take the time to develop interaction and synergy in response to the Visions, through consultation between the major partners at global level. These consultations should be on approach, rather than on substance. They should include such issues as democratic participation, local initiative versus international initiative, the role of global funding, pros and cons of private sector support, etc. These consultations are to be held at global level, not because global actors should be the major players, but because, as mentioned, they influence ways of working through their organisations at lower levels, their constituencies and the mandates they have been given, and in many other ways.

Much as we would like to avoid international gatherings, such consultations can only be effectively held through mutual discussions at meetings and other get-togethers. A useful first step is to look at the different sectoral and regional documents and to comment on differences and similarities and build our approaches from there. More people need to have access to these documents.

Debates between the various sector groups have hardly been held. They are essential to ascertain on which issues there are similar thoughts and which require further debate. This is essential before the organisations can begin to decide what to jointly promote and act upon.

These consultations will take time. It would seem however that the availability of the Visions presents a unique opportunity to take time to think and debate the approaches for the longer term – the 25 years we had in mind originally. It will be particularly important to establish shared thinking and joint action. That may be better follow-up to the excellent information now available than to push on as usual.”

This chapter draws together a range of initiatives and actions that are emerging in the water domain. The selections included here are illustrative only and are not intended to be comprehensive. There are many other activities equally important that cannot be included due to restricted space. A more complete inventory of different water related activities is being compiled and readers are directed to the Second World Water Forum website. This chapter ends by drawing together the thoughts and ideas expressed in the earlier sections of this report, covering both substance and process.

For its part, GWP intends to support the process of integrated water resource management in the regions and strengthen the cross-sectoral dialogue and debate at regional and national level. GWP will endeavour to facilitate the actions proposed in the Framework for Action and also communicate and update the regional Vision to Action reports. This will include documenting,

generating and supporting good practices, enhancing awareness and political will, defining gaps in strategic assistance and initiating regional programmes. In carrying out such tasks, GWP will seek to form partnerships and support the activities of other players in the new spirit of partnership.

A large number of activities are planned by the GWP regional partnerships to provide support to the process of integrated water resource management in the regions. For example, a number of country consultations are planned in Central & Eastern Europe to spread the messages of the World Water Forum among stakeholders in the region. A special effort is being made to further involve civil society and bring together NGOs from the region to define the role and expectations of future “Water Clubs” in each country. The GWP (South Asia) aims to support the establishment of multi-stakeholder groups at a micro-basin level as an informal mechanism to resolve water allocation disputes between various users and between upstream and downstream user groups. A Mediterranean water action plan will be elaborated to help the Mediterranean countries develop national action plans. In the fourteen Southern African countries there will be a promotion campaign for IWRM and the regional water Vision – with an emphasis on young people. Country stakeholder meetings will be held in South America to promote a greater understanding of IWRM among politicians and society. In Central America the focus will be on knowledge brokerage, including the gathering and dissemination of best practices from the region and translation into Spanish of best practices from other regions and updating the regional water management plan.

Mobilising political will

The global Framework for Action is drawn together through a common goal of achieving water security. Water security not only contributes to the achievement of International Development Targets for 2015 related to reducing poverty, improving health, eliminating malnutrition and maintaining a healthy environment, but can also provide a conceptual framework and associated measurable indicators at global, regional and national levels. A key step in meeting these targets would be further discussion and adoption of specific water security targets based on those developed in the Framework for Action. Although the international level is an important motor for change, it is important that countries establish their own targets as this provides political commitment. This has to be done by the countries themselves and the GWP for example, in the South East Asia region, is planning to help countries to formulate their own water security targets, and China has also stated similar intentions.

The Forum drew attention to the importance of targets as a focus for action and a means to assess progress. The Framework for Action presented six indicative water security targets and these should now be discussed further. The Heads of State in the Millennium Declaration of the UN General Assembly adopted one of the six targets (that for drinking water) and this is a significant step forward. Unfortunately, the more challenging target for sanitation was not included and concerted pressure needs to be put on governments and the UN so that it is accepted in the next General Assembly or as part of the Rio +10 process. The remaining four indicative targets, on IWRM, water and food, floods and environment are equally important but less well developed. More work is needed to improve and finalise them. In addition to international targets, countries should prepare their own targets to meet the vision aims. This could then feed into the work of the World Water Development Report.

Some comments on targets and milestones

“The Vision for Central and Eastern Europe contains many targets and milestones for the vision and its strategies. Similarly the Global Framework for Action included ‘indicative water security targets’, that may serve as an example and may be translated into regional water security targets”. (GWP Central and Eastern Europe)

“At a national level, there must be more capacity building and support for countries to formulate their own targets, by way of providing country based model for target setting. This will allow for a standardised set of targets to be established globally”. (NGO Working Group)

“It is more difficult to establish comprehensive targets for ecosystems than for drinking water or sanitation. Three options that could be considered are: (a) effective protection, management or restoration of 500 million ha of wetlands – or freshwater ecosystems – there are about 50 to 60m ha of wetlands conserved to date under the Ramsar Convention; (b) guarantee ‘no net loss’ of freshwater ecosystems taking the year 2000 as a baseline for developing countries and 1960 for industrialised nations – the latter group must restore significant natural values and (c) put in practice an ecologically representative network of sustainably-managed wetlands covering more than x% of the world’s wetland types by 2010. The GWP could convene a small group of experts to consider these options and propose a global target to be reflected in regional Visions and frameworks for action”. (WWF)

There is a saying that ‘what you can’t measure, you can’t manage’ – and targets must be monitored to assess progress against key milestones. Targets are useful if suitable (simple and not data hungry) indicators can be developed and agreed; this is an important part of the follow-up activity on targets. Organisations, such as UN agencies, professional associations and research institutes may already have considerable knowledge in this area although much of it may be too academic or complex.

A common set of indicators and a common language for measuring progress is important. In this respect, global efforts to establish an overarching schema for targets and indicators would be beneficial and used to support local and regional initiatives. This is a key aspect of the World Water Development Report and the Secretariat has recently begun work on indicators. Initial ideas have followed three inter-linked categories related to water demand and needs for different water uses, assessment of water availability, and social and ecological capacity to adjust or deal with water related stress.

World Water Development Report of the United Nations

An example of an overall action to bring together the disparate strands of the water community is the World Water Development Report that was announced at the closing session of the Forum. The United Nations, under the auspices of the ACC Sub-Committee on Water Resources, and its collaborators, will produce a biennial assessment of the state of freshwater resources. Funded by the Japanese Government, a small Secretariat has recently been established in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) offices in Paris. The first edition will be available in 2002 to coincide with the Rio +10 conference, which marks the Earth Summit's tenth anniversary. The report will chart progress toward freshwater-related objectives in Agenda 21 and build on, as well as extend earlier assessments. The state of river basin, regional, continental and global freshwater will be diagnosed, including its quantity, quality, and use; the organisational, socio-economic and environmental context of its management; and current problems and emerging threats. Indices for water sustainability will be developed and reported – with special reports on different themes (e.g. health, poverty, food security, etc.) included with each issue. Over time, the report will help to serve as a mechanism for harmonisation of national monitoring strategies and to ensure data reliability and compatibility.

Making water governance effective

Strengthening the management of shared waters

Co-operation and co-ordination in shared waters continues to grow and to be strengthened. For example in West Africa the Ministers in charge of water resources have adopted a Regional Action Plan for IWRM with 6 programmes to a value of \$US 25 million. They have agreed to create a framework for regional co-operation on integrated water resources management, the harmonisation of policies and legislation on water issues and exchange of experience within ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States). A short-term plan is being formulated for Lake Chad to achieve enhanced collaboration and capacity building among the riparian countries. A long-term plan (20-year) for the implementation of sub-basin and national programmes will ultimately lead to shared management of water resources within and between countries and at national, sub basin and basin levels.

Green Cross water emergency plan for the Middle East

“In March 2000, Green Cross International undertook a fact-finding Mission to Israel, the Palestinian Authority and Jordan, as part of an effort to develop practical solutions to the problem of the region's increasingly scarce water resources. An official representative was nominated from each country to join a Co-ordinating Team of international personalities from the public and private sectors, including representatives of each party, to discuss and develop solutions to the region's shared water problems. The Co-ordinating team is supported by a Working Unit composed of experts from governments, international institutions, NGOs, academia and the private sector. The Middle East initiative promoted by President Gorbachev and Green Cross International is in line with the proposal of the Sovereignty Panel to establish a neutral international body for mediation in times of, and in order to prevent water-related conflicts.”

Strengthening river basin management

The need to strengthen river basin and aquifer management was identified in the Framework for Action as a key component of making water governance effective. Documenting practical experience and pilot studies has been identified as a first step in moving toward full-scale activities for improving cross-sectoral basin management.

Building on discussions at the Forum, a partnership of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), World Conservation Union (IUCN), the World Bank and the World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF) has emerged. The partnership aims to operationalise an ecosystem approach to land and water resources management, basin-by-basin, with participation by stakeholders and to support this approach through national policy/institutional/legal reforms and key investments. This is one of the most significant initiatives to develop since the Forum.

A partnership for integrated land and water management at the basin level

“The Partnership of GEF, IUCN, WB and WWF emerged following discussions at the Second World Water Forum. Targets include: demonstrating, in collaboration with participating countries, how to operationalise integrated land and water resources management in 6-10 river, lake and coastal basins; developing periodic activities for joint learning among the projects; and incorporating the successful ecosystem-based approaches into the respective programmes of each organisation. A firm commitment will be required from the country partners and, in some instances, sub-national levels of government. The partnership will be co-ordinated and managed from the respective headquarters of each organisation. Activities on the ground will depend on the interest and capacity at the regional or country level. Forthcoming international events such as Dublin +10, Rio +10, and the Third World Water Forum will be used to disseminate the practical lessons learned from the collaborative work of the four organisations.

Following agreement on the initiative and the way in which to move forward, each organisation will prepare an inventory of potential river basins for consideration. This inventory will be based on the location of ongoing (and intended) projects in or around river basins, and will investigate the potential of these projects for a joint initiative. Each organisation will, in turn, review its own resources to support this new initiative. Particular attention will be given to identifying river basins of different sizes and those that feature a range of cross-sectoral management issues. A strategy will be developed with each candidate country and partner for the coming 2-5 year period, based on the opportunities identified for collaboration.”

Involving the private sector

Groups of industrialists joined the vision to action process and Forum discussions through the CEO panel. The CEO panel consists of a number of major international companies that wish to contribute to awareness and practical solutions in sustainable water management, which is enhanced through their relationship with the Water Group of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. The panel has pledged to continue its work and to extend its membership to a wider constituency of industrial partners. Nine participants from the CEO panel in The Hague have confirmed that they will participate in the preparations and discussions in the CEO panel for Japan 2003 and five others have expressed interest. The companies include both water and non-water related businesses covering a wide range of activities although presently there are no companies from developing countries. Other initiatives with the private sector include the initiatives of the WSSCC who intend to work with smaller private industries to implement aspects of its Vision 21 framework for action.

CEO Panel – Commitments to Action

“The Ecological Management Foundation has prepared a proposal that covers the period from October 2000 to March 2003. The proposal includes: i) a follow-up of the joint statement to the Ministerial Conference on Water Security issued by the World Water Forum CEO Panel on business and industry on March 20th 2000 in the Hague, ii) interaction with other major groups in order to clarify issues that were touched upon by each of the groups but not sufficiently debated between them, such as pricing of water, private/public partnerships and transfer of best practice and iii) new issues where the private sector could play a supportive role in achieving a sustainable water situation in the coming decades and that should be addressed in Japan in 2003.”

Generating water wisdom

Raising awareness

During the Millennium Assembly the Secretary General of the United Nations drew the attention of more than one hundred-fifty heads of state to the current water crisis and requested them to act on it. He also emphasised the importance of building more recognition of the seriousness of the crisis: “None of this will happen without public awareness and mobilisation campaigns, to bring home to people the extent and the causes of the current and impending water crisis.”

Extracts from the United Nations Millennium Declaration of September 2000

The Declaration draws attention to the importance of water and water-related activities in supporting development and eradicating poverty. The Declaration reinforces water-related targets by resolving to “to halve, by the year 2015 ... the proportion of people who are unable to reach, or to afford, safe drinking water...”. In re-affirming the principles of sustainable development, including those set out in agenda 21, the Declaration also emphasises conservation and stewardship in protecting our common environment and specifically resolves “...to stop the unsustainable exploitation of water resources, by developing water management strategies at the regional, national and local levels, which promote both equitable access and adequate supplies...”.

Calls for action have also been expressed at the national level. For example, the recent drought in India has increased the government’s determination to undertake water conservation measures. Prime Minister Vajapayee has called for “a nation-wide people’s movement” to tackle water scarcity. He recommended rainwater harvesting as a “simple idea” that can meet the drinking water needs of our urban and rural populations. In the capital, New Delhi, the state government has called for an amendment in building by-laws making rainwater harvesting mandatory for individuals and co-operative housing societies. It has also launched an advertising campaign to promote the construction of rooftop rainwater collection tanks.

While the Second World Water Forum has been immensely important in creating water awareness, a lot more is required. A number of initiatives that combine awareness building with practical action are in the making. It is important that non-water related organisations are brought into the process. For example, following the Forum, the Junior Chamber International plan to undertake a three-year flagship project that would involve a large number of its 350,000 members in local improved water management activities.

Sharing knowledge and experience

The World Water Forum brought together many actors with key roles to play in the implementation of the Vision and Framework for Action and regional Visions to Action. Emerging from the Forum proceedings, and cutting across disciplines and sectors, important new alliances have been forged and/or existing alliances and partnerships strengthened.

A Gender and Water Alliance has been instigated as part of a continuing push for the inclusion of gender considerations in water resources management and the equal involvement of women and men in the water sector. The alliance will advocate change on the ground in areas such as gender-sensitive information sharing, networking and capacity building and its importance has been noted by Chandni Joshi, Regional Programme Director of UNIFEM (United Nations Development Fund for Women, in South Asia).

Forging alliances – Gender and Water

“Partners that have been involved in gender mainstreaming in the Vision consultations and documents have formed an alliance that will continue to assist implementation of the Vision on the ground. The alliance, drawn from the seventy-five organisations involved in the process, held their first post-Hague meeting in Paris (June/July 2000) as part of the continued push for the inclusion of gender considerations in water resources management and the equal involvement of women and men in the water sector.

A Gender and Water Alliance Meeting expanded on the issues and activities that the alliance will carry forward in the years ahead as an associated programme of the GWP. The meeting assembled all partners as a formal alliance for the first time since the Second World Water Forum to discuss proposals and identify concrete activities and outputs for the follow-up programme, to agree on the organisational set-up of the alliance and to establish the terms of reference for the Alliance Secretariat to be hosted by the IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre in the Netherlands.

Another initiative is the partnership formed between the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the Alliance for Global Sustainability to develop water related and technology-based solutions towards more sustainable business operations. The partnership will give the Alliance, which consists of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, University of Tokyo and the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology access to case material developed in member companies of the Council.

At the community level there are many initiatives being formulated by international and local NGOs. An example is the Women, Water and Wisdom Agenda of the Sri Lanka Network of Women Water Professionals, which builds capacity of both professional and community women and could be replicated in other areas. Existing networks can be used cost effectively to promote the water message, for example using health care personnel.

WaterAid advocacy co-ordination

“As one of the outcomes from the WaterAid advocacy workshop held at the Second World Water Forum, participants were united in the formation of an international network focussed on co-ordinating advocacy initiatives and information. The network aims to strengthen civil society inputs in national water and sanitation programmes and international forums leading up to Earth Summit 2002. The participants agreed that WaterAid should head up the network at the initial stages. More than 150 participating NGOs have enlisted on the network.”

The Forum also resulted in commitments for improved exchange of knowledge and experiences related to river basin management. As one of the GWP Associated Programmes, the International Network of Basin Organisations (INBO) will be strengthened and its operations extended to cover Central and Eastern Europe and South Asia. In particular, INBO will receive support to build links between existing and embryo river basin organisations or between administrations preparing reforms based on basin management. They will provide advice on possible organisation design and management tools and support processes undertaken by River Basin Organisations (RBOs) and their collaboration with civil society.

Tackling urgent water priorities***Protecting and restoring water resources and ecosystems***

The threat to many wetlands and river systems through over-abstraction and pollution was highlighted in many of the regional Vision and Framework for Actions. Building on and reinforcing this theme, the team responsible for the Lake Biwa studies is proposing to develop a specific World Lake Vision as part of an effort to inform those concerned with issues of the scale and magnitude of the problems. Hopefully, the outputs from this exercise could benefit other international processes such as Rio +10.

New IUCN initiative for water for nature

At its Second World Conservation Congress in Amman, Jordan, IUCN announced a US\$30 million initiative for freshwater and healthy ecosystems, supported by the Dutch government and other donors. The aim is to fill an important missing link in water activities by focussing on the healthy ecosystems that renew our water and support all life on earth, human as well as species. The initiative, which has been developed following consultations with IUCN members and partners, will demonstrate how catchments and our water resources can be managed in a sustainable way through an integrated approach. The focus will be on protecting, restoring and managing ecosystems that provide clean water and other valuable services to communities. It will include field level demonstrations, empower communities to participate in decision-making and the governance of river basins, develop legal and financial tools and learn lessons from real experiences. Central to the initiative is the idea that investments in ecosystem conservation and the sustainable use of water resources are a cheap way of water management – much more effective than restoring degraded ecosystems.

The integration of wetlands, biodiversity and river basin management is the central theme behind proposals for a River Basin Initiative under the sponsorship of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Bureau of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. This recognises the central part that ecosystems play in improving water security for people. A draft proposal was

discussed recently in Nairobi, which focuses on establishing a global network to share information and link support activities and projects that demonstrate the principles and practice of integrated water resources management, with an ecosystem approach. The Secretariat for the Initiative will be based at the Global Environment Centre in Malaysia with the support of the Malaysian Government.

The Framework for Action highlighted the need for a major focus on groundwater, so often neglected and yet the main source of drinking and agricultural water in many areas. The World Bank and others, including GWP, are supporting a Groundwater Management Advisory Team that will provide expertise to assist grassroots action.

Achieving water-food security

The Framework for Action stressed the need for much more focus on the dual securities of food and water. There is a need for more debate at the international level, with more evidence collected in order to inform this debate, as well as practical support at the national level. An informal cross-sectoral roundtable discussion was organised during the Stockholm Water Week, August 2000, to bring together some principle actors in the Water for Food and Water and Nature visions and thus to examine ways forward in this important area. The aim was to provide an informal setting for the exchange of information on post-Hague follow-up initiatives being prepared by different groups and to forge alliances between key actors on new initiatives to strengthen their impact.

The meeting will hopefully be the beginning of a major global dialogue to identify gaps, particularly “out of the box” activities and identify non-water specialists or groups that can make a significant contribution to meeting the challenge. The International Water Management Institute (IWMI) will host a large stakeholder meeting in December 2000 to launch a ‘Dialogue on water, food and environmental security’. Many key players have formed a partnership to sponsor this meeting and key aims during the preparatory stage are to cement this broad coalition of interests, support combined studies to assess the costs and benefits and future directions in irrigated agriculture, and facilitate a comprehensive set of innovative approaches. At the national level, the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage, and others, aim to further develop the PODIUM analysis model, which was developed as part of the Vision, and apply it to specific countries.

Extending sanitation coverage and hygiene education

Vision 21 and the Framework for Action both emphasised that the slow progress in coverage of sanitation services has to be dramatically increased. To give a boost to the drive for sanitation more than eight organisations have combined their efforts in the “Sanitation Connection”. The Sanitation Connection will make up-to-date knowledge available on technologies, institutions and financing possibilities of sanitation systems. Vision 21 also highlighted the importance of engaging the local private sector involved in the manufacture of water supply and sanitation equipment.

Vision 21 – moving forward

“In the post-Hague process, the focus of the Vision 21 Framework for Action will be on actions at community and national level according to the Vision 21 approach. Action Plans will be gradually developed through consultation at the country level. It is envisaged that on this basis, catalytic support will be provided at the regional and global levels. This support, geared to facilitate processes at country level and the provision of information and experience gained, is expected to be strongest in the initial implementation phases. As capacity and experience at country levels grows stronger, this facilitation may be phased out.”

WaterAid has pledged itself to work with the WSSCC to achieve Vision 21. The modality was discussed at their bi-annual conference in Brazil in November 2000. An important factor in implementing Vision 21 will be to test the approach in complex, real-life urban situations, for example in Calcutta and/or Mexico City – as the experience of these two mega-cities could enrich each other as well as other metropolitan centres facing similar challenges. The first steps toward organising an initial seminar in Calcutta to explore the potential are presently underway.

The importance of engaging the community and focusing on community-based action is also emphasised in many other initiatives such as the plan by Disaster Mitigation International (an Indian NGO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Gujarat to instigate a process to review the role of Water and Sanitation Committees at a district level, with a view to finding out how it can build and improve partnerships at a local level. In conjunction with this initiative, Disaster Mitigation International has also initiated a study of water users in slum areas to establish their views on partnerships and urban governance. The International Secretariat for Water (Canada) has created the International Water Community Foundation aimed at developing community enterprises for water and sanitation in low-income peri-urban areas.

Meeting the challenges of urbanisation

Local Government is an important component of the institutional structure for water management but was not adequately recognised at the Forum. The Water Campaign initiated by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) aims to provide local governments with a framework for addressing their unique local urban water management concerns. These concerns could be surface and groundwater pollution, inadequate access by urban poor to safe water and sanitation and associated health risks, financial sustainability and institutional fragmentation of urban fresh water management. The Water Campaign aims to place fresh water management in the context of long-term transformation of urban society from one that exploits freshwater resources to one of respect for water.

Water Campaign – Working with Local Government

The Water Campaign will apply a tested program model – based on the Local Agenda 21 Campaign and the Cities for Climate Protection Campaign. The participating local governments will be guided through a process of policy making, action planning, implementation and evaluation. The local governments will work on at least one of the three campaign agenda's which are: (i) *the municipal agenda* (focuses on the impact of municipal water operations on the local water environment); (ii) *the community water agenda* (encourages the urban community to identify and report upon water-related activities in the city; and (iii) *the watershed agenda* (supports local governments to become involved in regional watershed management). The Campaign will summarise and document progress in the different municipalities, provide for cross-municipality exchange of experience and negotiate agreements and partnerships with national governments and national municipal organisations to establish national campaigns.

Improving the management of floods

There have been many recent examples of severe flooding throughout the world. During and subsequent to the Forum pledges were made to support the Mozambican government in its struggle to overcome the impact of catastrophic floods early in the year. This is an issue highlighted in the Water in Rivers vision and echoed in the Framework for Action. The Japanese Government has given it the highest priority. They have pledged support to the Mozambique Government and hosted a workshop in October 2000 to prepare strategies for future assistance. Floods have recently struck South East Asia reinforcing the importance of such extreme events and this is likely to be one of the principle areas of focus in the lead up to the Third World Water Forum.

Mozambique Flood Workshop

An International Conference on Floods was held in Maputo, Mozambique, in October 2000. The conference was in response to the devastating floods, which hit the region in March 2000. The conference assessed the hydrological, geographical, engineering, social and other aspects of the recent floods experience in the country and prepared plans for follow-up action. Some 250 people attended the meeting including SADC Ministers responsible for water, senior Government officials, and many international experts.

The Framework for Action did not discuss large dams as the World Commission on Dams has addressed this contentious issue. The Commission launched its final report “Dams and Development: a new framework for decision-making” on 16 November 2000. The report presents a thorough analysis of existing dams, an assessment of alternatives and an analysis of planning, decision making and compliance issues. It highlights seven strategic priorities supported by policy principles to assist decision-making, as well as a set of 26 guidelines for good practice. The report places dam development squarely within the broader development context and proposes an approach based on the recognition of rights and the assessment of risks. It stresses the importance of sustainability, of a more thorough examination of alternatives and getting agreement from affected people before proceeding with any development. The report does not give adequate recognition to the benefits of dams and many consider the recommendations to be ideal but impractical. The recommendations would require a much more rigorous approach that is likely to lead to a longer decision-making process and increased costs. It will, however, ensure that if a large dam is the best solution the development should be able to proceed within a general consensus that takes account of issues such as resettlement and compensation as an integral part of the planning rather than as an after thought. Given the great numbers of people adversely affected by such large-scale developments and the strong views on this subject, the report will no doubt be the subject of much debate over the coming months.

Investing for a secure water future

Clearly, the process of moving towards achieving the Vision will require considerable investment flows. It is recognised that the resources needed are likely to stretch capacity at all levels. The Framework for Action made a first estimate of the needs and continuing research is required on financial flows, their sustainability, and the economic efficiency of investments to water, supplemented by consideration of mechanisms and policy changes to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of financial flows over the next 25 years. This should be given a high priority at the next World Water Forum.

The GWP have drafted a proposal for continuing the study of financial needs to follow-up the Framework for Action work making use of the Vision models. The main focus would be on the regions with the preparation of a methodology that can be used by different countries to make more precise estimates of finance needs. Two or three countries would be studied in–depth as pilot studies. The study would also examine the issues of equity and efficiency in financial resource use.

Mobilising financial resources

Numerous pledges of support were made during the Second World Water Forum. These included, among others, significant financial resources such as:

- The Netherlands government pledged to double its support to water sector activities in developing countries over a four-year period, from about US\$ 50 million to US\$ 100 million per year, part of which will support World Bank water initiatives.
- The UK Department for International Development (DFID) pledged to double its support to the water domain in support of its overall strategic objective of poverty elimination.
- The Global Environmental Facility (GEF) pledged US\$500 million over the next 5 years to help operationalise comprehensive land and water resources management at the basin-level
- The United States Secretary of State called for an Alliance for Global Water Security in the 21st Century and pledged an initial contribution of US\$2 million to start a new fund within the UN Development Programme to improve transboundary/regional water management
- The Japanese Government agreed to host the Third World Water Forum and provide support for the production of the World Water Development Report.

The GWP, working with the World Water Council, is also facilitating a consultation to examine ways to raise new finance for the water sector. The specific objective is to make proposals for changes in financial policies. Usually most of the water sector relies on public funding, which has been declining slowly but steadily, and the task force would examine whether this trend can be reversed and if so to what extent. It will also examine to what extent private funding could fill any gaps and how this could be mobilised.

Moving forward – the next steps

The Second World Water Forum and associated Vision to Action process has made a major contribution in raising awareness and moving concepts forward. It has given extra impetus and a high profile to water. Although much remains to be done, there is significant common ground on which to move forward.

There is a growing awareness of the challenges facing the world but more work is needed to convey this message to an even wider group of non-water specialists. One important element is for the water community to communicate the complexity of water challenges in a simple way that can be readily understood by the public and politicians and other non-expert decision-makers. Care is needed to avoid overuse of complicated concepts and inter-relationships as this may discourage interest from busy people.

What is required is change — changes in attitudes, changes in practices, change in processes — and this will necessarily entail overcoming barriers at every turn. The process of change needs to be addressed on all fronts and must take cognisance of different social and cultural belief systems. The Forum itself was just a beginning, a start in this change process and the actions that are developed in the next three years will lay the foundations and determine the course of events on the ground for the longer-term future. These early steps are therefore crucial to getting the process on course.

The Visions expressed a desire for change by many in the water community. It is important that everyone builds on the growing consensus and agrees on the ways forward, whilst also continuing the dialogue to resolve outstanding issues. The next steps should be more skewed towards how to bring about the necessary change in the way the water world operates and implement actions so

that more people have water security. This will necessarily require a wide range of players to engage in the movement for water security, to generate and promote workable practices and to bring players and practices together to facilitate the implementation of the necessary action.

Many players acting on behalf of their constituencies will be developing the next steps for achieving water security. For its part, GWP, based on various consultations and discussions in Stockholm in August 2000, will continue to work to put IWRM into practice and facilitate and support others in actions for water security. The Framework for Action and regional Vision to Action documents will be the cornerstone of GWP activity based on the key FFA themes of mobilising political will, making water governance effective, generating water wisdom, tackling urgent water priorities and investing for a secure water future. Based on the options outlined in the Framework for Action and other Forum documents actions should be prioritised according to local needs to ensure maximum benefits from scarce financial and human resources. In conjunction with this, to meet its overall mission, the GWP focus will increasingly shift to actions in the regions and countries, with a reinforced and more global co-ordination and facilitation role as appropriate. GWP have prepared a Comprehensive Work Programme for 2001 to 2003 to follow up the Framework for Action based on four inter-related programmatic objectives, namely:

- *Establishing partnerships and mobilising political will*
- *Building strategic alliances for action*
- *Promoting good practice for Integrated Water Resources Management*
- *Developing and promoting regional actions*

The GWP work programme will aim to supplement and reinforce the actions and initiatives being prepared by others, some of which have been highlighted earlier in this chapter.

This report provides a synthesis of views on which those formulating their next steps will be able to draw. The Vision set out a direction and the Framework for Action gave an overarching structure for action, it is now opportune to capitalise on the momentum gained by the Forum. It is important that we all work towards the Third World Water Forum with an increased emphasis on how to do things and demonstrate actions that work.

Annex 1

Ministerial Declaration of The Hague on Water Security in the 21st Century

1. Water is vital for the life and health of people and ecosystems and a basic requirement for the development of countries, but around the world women, men and children lack access to adequate and safe water to meet their most basic needs. Water resources, and the related ecosystems that provide and sustain them, are under threat from pollution, unsustainable use, land-use changes, climate change and many other forces. The link between these threats and poverty is clear, for it is the poor who are hit first and hardest. This leads to one simple conclusion: business as usual is not an option. There is, of course, a huge diversity of needs and situations around the globe, but together we have one common goal: **to provide water security in the 21st Century**. This means ensuring that freshwater, coastal and related ecosystems are protected and improved; that sustainable development and political stability are promoted, that every person has access to enough safe water at an affordable cost to lead a healthy and productive life and that the vulnerable are protected from the risks of water-related hazards.

2. These threats are not new. Nor are attempts to address them. Discussions and actions started in Mar del Plata in 1977, continued through Dublin and were consolidated into Chapter 18 of Agenda 21 in Rio in 1992. They were reaffirmed in Paris 1998, CSD-6 and in the Second World Water Forum and Ministerial Conference. The process will continue in the meeting in Bonn in 2002 (“Dublin+10”), through the 10-year review of implementation of Agenda 21, and beyond. These and other international meetings have produced a number of agreements and principles that are the basis upon which this and future statements should be built. The goal of providing water security in the 21st Century is reflected in the unprecedented process of broad participation and discussion by experts, stakeholders and government officials in many regions of the world. This process has profited from the important contributions of the World Water Council, who launched the World Water Vision process at the First World Water Forum in Marrakech, from the formation of the World Commission on Water in the 21st Century and from the development of the Framework for Action by the Global Water Partnership.

The Main Challenges

3. To achieve water security, we face the following main challenges:

Meeting basic needs: to recognise that access to safe and sufficient water and sanitation are basic human needs and are essential to health and well-being, and to empower people, especially women, through a participatory process of water management.

Securing the food supply: to enhance food security, particularly of the poor and vulnerable, through the more efficient mobilisation and use, and the more equitable allocation of water for food production.

Protecting ecosystems: to ensure the integrity of ecosystems through sustainable water resources management.

Sharing water resources: to promote peaceful co-operation and develop synergies between different uses of water at all levels, whenever possible, within and, in the case of boundary and trans-boundary water resources, between states concerned, through sustainable river basin management or other appropriate approaches.

Managing risks: to provide security from floods, droughts, pollution and other water-related hazards.

Valuing water: to manage water in a way that reflects its economic, social, environmental and cultural values for all its uses, and to move towards pricing water services to reflect the cost of their provision. This approach should take account of the need for equity and the basic needs of the poor and the vulnerable.

Governing water wisely: to ensure good governance, so that the involvement of the public and the interests of all stakeholders are included in the management of water resources.

Meeting the Challenges

4. We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegation, recognise that our gathering and this Declaration are part of a wider process, and are linked to a wide range of initiatives at all levels. We acknowledge the pivotal role that governments play in realising actions to meet the challenges. We recognise the need for institutional, technological and financial innovations in order to move beyond “business as usual” and we resolve to rise to meet these challenges.

5. The actions advocated here are based on **integrated water resources management**, that includes the planning and management of water resources, both conventional and non-conventional, and land. This takes account of social, economic and environmental factors and integrates surface water, groundwater and the ecosystems through which they flow. It recognises the importance of water quality issues. In this, special attention should be paid to the poor, to the role, skills and needs of women and to vulnerable areas such as small island states, landlocked countries and desert areas.

6. Integrated water resources management depends on collaboration and partnerships at all levels, from individual citizens to international organisations, based on a political commitment to, and wider societal awareness of, the need for water security and the sustainable management of water resources. To achieve integrated water resources management, there is a need for coherent national and, where appropriate, regional and international policies to overcome fragmentation, and for transparent and accountable institutions at all levels.

7. We will further advance the process of collaboration in order to turn agreed principles into action, based on partnerships and synergies among the government, citizens and other stakeholders. To this end:

A. We will establish targets and strategies, as appropriate, to meet the challenges of achieving water security. As part of this effort, we support the development of indicators of progress at the national and sub-national level. In carrying this forward, we will take account of the valuable work done for the Second World Water Forum.

B. We will continue to support the UN system to re-assess periodically the state of freshwater resources and related ecosystems, to assist countries, where appropriate, to develop systems to measure progress towards the realisation of targets and to report in the biennial World Water Development Report as part of the overall monitoring of Agenda 21.

C. We will work together with other stakeholders to develop a stronger water culture through greater awareness and commitment. We will identify best practices, based on enhanced research and knowledge generation capacities, knowledge dissemination through education and other channels and knowledge sharing between individuals, institutions and societies at all appropriate levels. This will include co-ordination at regional and other levels, as appropriate, to promote arrangements for coping with water-related disasters and for sharing experiences in water sector reform. It will also include international co-operation in technology transfers to, and capacity building in, developing countries.

D. We will work together with stakeholders to increase the effectiveness of pollution control strategies based on polluter pays principles and to consider appropriate rules and procedures in the fields of liability and compensation for damage resulting from activities dangerous to water resources.

E. Against the background of the preparatory work for and discussions in The Hague, we will work within multilateral institutions, particularly the UN system, International Financial Institutions and bodies established by Inter-Governmental Treaties, to strengthen water-related policies and programmes that enhance water security, and to assist countries, as appropriate, to address the major challenges identified in this Declaration.

F. We call upon the Secretary General of the United Nations to further strengthen the co-ordination and coherence of activities on water issues within the UN system. We will adopt consistent positions in the respective governing bodies to enhance coherence in these activities.

G. We call upon the Council of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) to expand activities that are within the mandate of the GEF in relation to freshwater resources by catalysing investments in national water management issues that have a beneficial impact on international waters.

H. We welcome the contribution of the World Water Council in relation to the Vision and of the Global Water Partnership with respect to the development of the Framework for Action. We welcome follow-up actions by all relevant actors in an open, participatory and transparent manner that draws upon all major groups in society.

I. We note the statements (attached to this declaration) made by the representatives of the major groups and welcome them as a clear reflection of their readiness to work with us towards a secure water future for all.

8. Recognising that the actions referred to in paragraph 7, including progress on targets and strategies, are important and ambitious, we will review our progress periodically at appropriate fora, including the meeting in Bonn in 2002 and the 10-year review of the implementation of Agenda 21.

9. The Ministerial Conference acknowledges with appreciation that a range of issues were discussed during the Second World Water Forum, and that the Chair of the Forum presented these issues to the Ministerial Conference. The importance of these issues is unquestionable; we will raise them for further consideration in relevant fora in the future and will consider their implications for our individual national situations.

10. The challenges are formidable, but so are the opportunities. There are many experiences around the world that can be built on. What is needed is for us all to work together, to develop collaboration and partnerships, to build a secure and sustainable water future. We will, individually and acting together, strive to achieve this and stimulate and facilitate the contributions of society as a whole. To this end, we note with appreciation that pledges were made at The Hague (attached to our declaration). This Declaration reflects the determination of our governments and represents a critical step in the process of providing water security for all.

11. We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegation, thank the government and people of The Netherlands for their vision and for their hospitality in hosting this conference and forum.

Agreed to on Wednesday 22 March 2000, in The Hague, The Netherlands

Annex 2

Summary of points raised during the Framework for Action Day Working Sessions at the Second World Water Forum – 21 March 2000

Protecting and restoring water resources and ecosystems

The key points raised during the discussions included:

- Introduce new environmental targets, such as, no net loss of freshwater ecosystems, pollution reduction/prevention, wetlands target
- Undertake full valuation of ecosystems
- Use economic instruments targeted to commercial water consumers and communities
- Encourage business responsibility in water use and to sponsor wetlands or other environmental initiatives downstream
- Introduce groundwater abstraction controls
- Share information on environmental knowledge
- Introduce natural resource accounting
- Introduce regional integrated plans with the basin as the focus for water management
- Introduce capacity building for the poor and use debt relief and swaps for the poor
- Give an increased focus on demand management
- Develop an understanding that environmental protection and development can be in harmony and should not be contradictory.

Achieving water-food security

A very wide-ranging discussion demonstrated the need for much more work in this area. Some of the main issues raised included:

- Increase access to technology for poor farmers
- Review on-going programmes of action with a view towards reform
- Integrate the agricultural sector with other sectors
- Increase education and awareness raising including social and gender aspects
- Focus on improving existing systems
- Create political will and establish national consensus for institutional reform to overcome poor irrigation system governance by public monopolies
- Encourage capacity building on food production and water security for main food producers

- Develop long-term policies at basin and sector level
- Bottom –up identification of research needs is important
- Ensure land tenure security before development
- Ensure self-financing of water-user organisations
- Irrigation reform should be accompanied by agricultural policy and programme interventions
- Basin/aquifer management institutions should include tradable irrigation service rights, effective regulation to control overdrafts, improve water efficiency and prevent salinisation and waterlogging.

Improving sanitation coverage and hygiene education

The focus in the FFA on sanitation was welcomed and many ideas were discussed on what approach to take and how to make this a more prominent issue, some ideas included:

- Focus on household decision-making
- Take account of the environmental and social effects of sanitation
- Emphasise the need for partnerships and synthesis of experiences
- Health education should be widely available for men, women and children in order to change attitudes and practices
- Sanitation should be a marketing, as well as a technical challenge
- Appropriate technology should be within people’s budgets and suit their preferences.
- Build capacity at different institutional levels and provide training in local languages
- Document past experience so that it can be built on in the future.

Meeting the challenge of urbanisation

The group accepted the growing importance of the urban environment and its special characteristics, some priority issues included:

- Good governance is necessary to provide water to the poor
- Implement cost recovery procedures from mid-income people
- Encourage water re-use
- Work with other sectors in an integrated way
- Include in contracts the requirement to provide water to the poor
- Define and prioritise economic investment
- Build on past informal successes
- Management of utilities should be transparent, accountable and efficient.

Improving flood management

Flooding was a very real issue at the Forum following a year of many news items on floods all over the world. Three main issues were raised: the vulnerability to floods, the physical aspects of flooding and flood preparedness. In this context several ideas were discussed:

- Encourage associations between communities, NGOs and Governments. Work with and involve communities
- Improve flood forecasting and awareness and exchange information across regions.
- Increase flood related research.
- Recognise environmental aspects of floods and environmental options for control
- Learn from past experience and strengthen documentation
- Provide emergency support for major events
- Link basic services to flood management measures
- Extend and enhance observation systems to basin-wide coverage
- Educate people and experts. Encourage capacity building at local level
- Introduce non-structural measures
- Ensure sound and sustainable maintenance practices
- Develop international guidelines on flood management
- Control unauthorised development along river corridors.

Annex 3

Summary of regional discussion workshops GWP Consultative Group meeting Stockholm 17th August 2000

Working group discussions

Four regional working groups (Asia, Africa, Europe and Americas) considered a set of four questions and reported back to the GWP plenary meeting. The following questions formed the basis of the discussions:

- A** Do you think the following are the key issues for outstanding debate?
- *How can IWRM be applied?*
 - *How can pricing be introduced without disadvantaging the poor?*
 - *How can pricing be extended to services other than domestic supplies?*
 - *How can the private sector be attracted?*
 - *How can public services be improved?*
 - *How can food demands and nature conservation be reconciled and what role can food trade play?*
- B** What are the mechanisms for moving forward and overcoming political barriers and what is the potential role for GWP?
- C** What is the value added by regional programmes/Framework for Action and their links with national and other regional programmes?
- D** What is the potential for further links to the next World Water Forum and other international meetings and are targets – global or local/regional – relevant?

Response from the Asia Group

A Key issues:

- implementing IWRM, with a particular focus on flood and drought management
- water quality improvement
- transboundary waters and eco-systems
- role of *local* private sector (small and medium enterprises). This is potentially important in service provision.

B Main mechanisms:

- Awareness raising
- Recognition among stakeholders of the true value of water
- Need to synthesise knowledge
- Involve younger generation in water issues
- Strengthen local level participation
- Involve the media more positively.

C Value added:

- Regional synergy builds a collective voice – important in attracting donor support
- Strong regional variations between south Asia and south-east Asia
- Urgent need to complete Framework for Action reports to provide mechanisms
- Regional programmes important but must be developed from bottom up.

D Linkages and targets:

- Important to influence the international process over the next two to three years
- Targets/indicators provide a mechanism to bring neighbouring countries up to the highest level
- Local measurable indicators are important
- Need a data base for international comparison for indicators.

Response from the Africa group

A Key issues:

- Private sector – local SMEs are important – key issue is to improve their operation and effectiveness
- IWRM seen as a basis for co-operation
- Urban-rural differences are important.

B Main mechanisms:

- GWP should identify gaps and work with existing initiatives to fill them
- Participation at country level – bring in more stakeholders.

C Value added:

- Regional programmes important but must be developed from bottom up
- At the same time, a continental approach to water issues raises political awareness
- Regional approach important basis for information exchange
- Important to link basin and regional initiatives.

D Linkages and targets:

- Rio plus 10 and Bonn meetings are politically more important than the Third WWF
- Range of targets at different levels are needed
- Water targets should link to national strategies (eg Agenda 21)
- Must have measurement mechanisms for assessment of achievements.

Response from the Europe group

A Key issues;

- Quantity and quality are seen as key issues in CEE.
- Participation in IWRM important
- EU and international conventions helpful in building participation (Aarhus convention).

B Main mechanisms:

- Increase stakeholder participation to ensure debate
- Raise awareness of elected politicians.

C Value added:

- Regional programmes important but must be developed from bottom up
- Regional groupings useful in Europe – already several, eg Danube Commission
- Regional approach provides mechanisms for linking areas – eg Black sea and Mediterranean
- GWP is not presently visible in Europe.

D Linkages and targets:

- Rio plus 10 and Bonn meetings are politically more important than the Third WWF
- Targets should be developed locally because of the diversity of countries.

Response from the Americas Group

A Key issues:

- Considerable debate on whether the issues proposed are appropriate. Some consideration is needed for water as a human right
- Fragmentation of institutions for water management reinforces need for river basin approach
- The questions need to be combined and reformulated, for example the main issue is how best to provide efficient service delivery and private, public and community providers are all relevant in the right environment.

B Main mechanisms:

- Need for participation emphasised
- Link science and action at the community level
- Encourage transboundary and international dialogue and exchange of experiences
- Use electronic media for structured debate
- GWP could bring ethics and ethical standards to debate
- Need to sensitise population /stakeholders to issues
- GWP also provides mechanisms for overcoming ‘self imposed isolation’ or ‘uniqueness’ position of individual countries.

C Value added:

- Regional actions add value through stimulating national action
- Mutual effort pushes water up political agendas
- Difficult to have regional dialogue if there is no local forum
- Regional groupings important for donor funding.

D Linkages and targets:

- Important meetings are scheduled in the region and these are more important than global events such as Bonn.
- Regional indicators of sustainability should recognise country differences.