

# 5<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum

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## Local Authorities' Declaration

As Mayors and local authority leaders from different parts of the world meeting in Istanbul in March 2009, we join in this **ISTANBUL URBAN WATER CONSENSUS** for adaptation of water management strategies in the face of global change.

### **Whereas:**

- We acknowledge that throughout history, water actions have been major instruments for leaders of major cities to adapt to environmental challenges and changes.
- We acknowledge that rapid population growth and urbanization, with over half of the world population now living in cities, is placing new stresses on water resources and on the systems that supply water and sanitation services to our people.
- We know that the current state of urban water resources is generally considered unsustainable in all countries due to long-term non-synchronized development and piecemeal solutions to problems. Ever increasing misuse of resources leads to a depletion of usable water, hampers equitable access and creates negative impacts on the environment.
- We recognize the inter-linkages among water, sanitation, hygiene, health and prosperity. However, we know that one billion people are without sufficient water supply today and an even larger population is lacking sanitation.
- We acknowledge that the nature, extent and dynamics of urban water problems differ between developing and developed countries. Whilst financing is the main business in question in developing countries, many cities in developed countries have to tackle with the course of their systems that are becoming inadequate for the needs of their population.
- We understand that new and changing patterns of climate change and variability will impact every aspect of the urban water cycle, including sea level and storm surge, air temperatures, rainfall patterns, stream flow regimes, ground water recharge, extreme events, pollution risks as well as citizens served.
- We understand the complex socio-economic issues associated with urban water management such as social inclusion, poverty, affordability, public preference and acceptability.

- We recognize our responsibility as city leaders, within our legitimate authority, to act thoughtfully and decisively to assess and manage the risks and to capture the potential benefits to citizens stemming from major water adaptations instruments.
- We know that major water actions taken for the better management of the environmental complexities are crucial to our efforts to alleviate poverty, achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and to protect biodiversity and natural systems.

**Further, in support of our pledge of action as Mayors:**

- We call on our national governments to ensure that local authorities have the legal authority and institutional capacity to prepare for climate variability and other risks.
- We encourage water professionals, engineers and scientists to develop improved systems for serving dense urban areas under new patterns of climate variability.
- We call on national governments and international agencies to establish effective systems for managing river basins, ensuring the role of city leaders in those processes.
- We invite Ministries of Agriculture, Forestry, Energy, and other sectors to take into coordinated consideration of the impacts of their policy choices on the hydrological cycle that affects urban areas.
- We call on national and international infrastructure funders to require that anticipated climate change be factored into the design of water, sanitary, storm-water and other urban infrastructure.
- We invite other Mayors and local authority leaders to join with us in developing and implementing water system management adaptation strategies that will help cities adapt to climate changes.

**Recognizing the urgent need to develop effective strategies for water management adaptations, each of us pledge, within our respective authorities, that we will**

- Identify emerging challenges and opportunities
- Develop adaptation plans
- Establish targets

as set forth in the **ANNEX** to this Declaration.

## ANNEX

As a signatory to the **Istanbul Urban Water Consensus**, the City undertakes to use its water system management to adapt to global changes including climate change, within the scope of its authority and resources and through the period until the Sixth World Water Forum:

### **Identify Emerging Challenges:**

The City will develop an assessment of challenges likely to impact its water resources and services, including the following, as applicable:

- Undertake an assessment of likely population and land use changes in cooperation with the relevant institutions.
- Determine the population lacking access to safe drinking water and sanitation.
- Determine the population most vulnerable to the water related health impacts.
- Carry out a study on infrastructural needs and their appropriate financing.
- Determine the aged infrastructure.
- Identify barriers to integrated management including sectoral pressures.
- Assemble the best available climate forecasts applicable to the hydrological factors that impact the city – from water source to sea.
- Assess the city's water resources capacity to deliver services under major scenarios of climate and global changes. Determine other climate-related risks, potential benefits and uncertainties with respect to water management.
- Conduct a vulnerability assessment for pollution and water-related disasters.
- Assess regulatory framework and institutional capacity

### **Develop Adaptation Plans:**

The City will develop an adaptation plan or plans, including the following, as applicable:

- Consider a range of water, sanitation and storm water management techniques to respond to urbanization and uncertainty and variability associated with global changes.
- Diversify sources of water supply via new storage facilities, sustainable groundwater extraction, inter-basin water transfer, water conservation, recycled water and desalination to provide more flexibility for an indeterminate future.
- Achieve integration among water systems.
- Invest in new and re-designed infrastructure towards efficient, effective and sustainable urban water systems, based on appropriate cost recovery ensuring affordability of service.
- Reduce water related health impacts to the urban population.
- Protect environment against cumulative impacts of urban development and climate change through integrated management. Ensure important aquatic habitats function.
- Restrict land-use to protect water resources and dependent biodiversity.

- Work with industry and the business sector to optimize water efficiency and reuse in processes and products and to stop pollution.
- Develop plans for flood control, drainage improvements, disaster response and preparation for sea level rise.
- Plan for the redesign and re-engineering of infrastructure, as necessary, to withstand extreme events or to perform under changed circumstances.
- Institute structural and non-structural risk management plans/measures to reduce damage by water-related disasters.
- Look for appropriate financial mechanisms.
- Improve governance.
- Engage with a wide circle of stakeholders.
- Adopt technological innovations.

**Establish Targets:**

The City will establish specific targets, tailored to its circumstances, pursuant to its jurisdiction and on the full voluntary basis, to support and implement its Adaptation Plans.

- Reduce the amount of water loss  $x$  % by  $x$  year.
- Increase water supply for human needs  $x$  % by  $x$  year.
- Save  $x$  % of per capita domestic water consumption by  $x$  year.
- Achieve internationally recognized water quality standards by  $x$  year.
- Achieve  $x$  % collection and  $x$  % treatment of human waste by  $x$  year.
- Inspect  $x$  % of industrial outfalls every year.
- Ensure appropriate amount of water for ecosystems needs by  $x$  year.
- Reduce damages due to water-related disasters as % of national (and/or regional) GDP to less than 5% of GDP.

In the interval between WWF5 (2009) and WWF6 (2012), the City will convene a workshop [if a major city] or attend a workshop [if a minor city] to engage with other local authorities in building capacity for using water system actions to help our cities adapt to climate and global changes.