



**5<sup>th</sup> WORLD WATER FORUM  
REGIONAL PROCESS**

**26+27 February 2008  
Amman, JORDAN**

**“WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES IN  
ARID AND SEMI-ARID REGIONS”**

**FINAL DOCUMENT**

The First Regional Meeting of the Fifth World Water Forum took place in Amman on 26-27 February 2008, with the participation of approximately 150 persons from 19 countries. Jordanian, Turkish, Israeli and Kuwaiti Ministers were present at the meeting hosted by the Jordanian Ministry of Water and Irrigation and the Turkish Ministry of Environment and Forestry. Presentations were made by the Arab Water Council, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Palestine, Tunisia, the League of Arab States, World Water Council and Turkey. The roundtable meetings among the Counties of this arid and semi-arid region, sharing similar problems, were very fruitful and gave informative results about the water management strategies. Many interesting ideas have emerged and comments have been made during the roundtable discussions.

The major points of the discussions of this meeting are as follows:

**Theme 1: Adaptation of Water Management to the Climate Change**

Scientific tools fitting to the specificities of the region should be developed and modified in order to evaluate the effects of climate change and to establish scenarios to mitigate its effects.

The creation of a network in the region is necessary in order to share water and climate related data with a view to providing input for scientific studies to give guidance to the decision makers.

**Theme 2: Financing**

The autonomy of water agencies should be ensured in order to increase their credibility to benefit from the existing surplus money for credit purposes in the global financing institutions with a view to funding water infrastructure and water sectors. A tailor-made lending system needs to be studied and tested. Therefore the private sector should be introduced both on the debt and equity side. Privatization without any regulation on water management has failed in some cases in developing countries. “Public Private Partnerships” are a mutually agreed solution in this respect. Financially projects with a high return rate such as non revenue should be given priority.

### **Theme 3: Availability of Water Resources**

Political, financial, technical and capacity constraints ought to be overcome in order to ensure the availability of water resources in the region by good will, sustainable and equitable cooperation, joint projects and benefit sharing among countries, wherever possible, as well as developing and applying new technologies.

The "Right to Water" is an issue to be elaborated more in the international fora such as the 5<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum.

Technology transfer and capacity building are important issues for the region.

### **Theme 4: Institutional Arrangements, Optimizing Public and Private Roles in Water Services**

Public Private Partnerships seem a more convenient model than privatization for optimizing public and private roles in water services.

Governments should continue to exercise their authority on policy making and administrative and legislative work, whereas the responsibility of water management should be left to the local authorities, unions and cooperatives. Furthermore, good governance and international practices ought to be promoted.

Failure and success stories and lessons learned should be presented as case studies during the 5<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum aiming to establish a comprehensive database.

### **Theme 5: Urban Water and Sanitation**

There is a considerable difference between water and sanitation services in rural and urban areas in the region. To remedy this, privatization appears as a solution at the first glance, however financing remains the main challenge. Reusing treated wastewater for artificial recharge should be done.

### **Theme 6: Modern Irrigation Techniques**

Measures should be taken in order to increase the awareness of the farmers on the modern and more efficient irrigation systems. Pilot projects ought to be developed and demonstrations made in order to train farmers.

Public Private Partnerships could be promoted in the implementation of irrigation projects by convincing decision makers to practice this model in their investments. Capacity building at the level of end users should be considered through farm demonstrations, pilot projects and workshops.