

The World Water Council announces a new Water Platform dedicated to Regional and Local Authorities

Istanbul, 27 May, 2014 - Cities and their suburbs are continuously growing, pollution is increasing, and the impact of climate change is being felt. All these factors are putting pressure on water resources, threatening human, economic and environmental security, and of course upon cities, which play a vital role in ensuring clean water and adequate sanitation for their citizens. Today, water service provision is increasingly decentralized. Managing water equitably, efficiently and sustainably requires cities to coordinate action and find solutions at a local level.

Solutions to water challenges are increasingly found at the local level. The Istanbul Water Consensus (IWC) is a unique initiative that recognizes that Local and Regional Authorities are at the center of water management. The World Water Council with partners such as UN-Habitat, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) and GWOPA water operators, are committed to assisting cities, towns and regions in developing their capabilities to respond to water and sanitation challenges. By providing support and opportunities to exchange, promote and learn, the Consensus helps and challenges local decision makers to improve their water management strategies and services in the face of global changes.

A global water platform for local decision makers

The Consensus acknowledges the need for concerted efforts in urban water management, and commits its signatories to taking stepwise action. In order to encourage others to follow their example and join the Consensus, the World Water Council and key partners have developed the IWC website: www.istanbulwaterconsensus.org.

Not only does the site provide information on the Consensus, its goals and its commitments but it also aims to showcase innovative and efficient solutions, actions and policies implemented worldwide by signatory Champion cities, such as: Bordeaux (France), Brisbane (Australia), Buenos Aires (Argentina), Incheon (Korea), León (Mexico), Osaka (Japan), State of São Paulo (Brazil).

Moving forward with the Istanbul Water Consensus for local and regional authorities

Local and regional leaders raised a common voice for water and called on national governments to create more effective partnerships concerning water and sanitation in 2006. On the occasion of the 4th World Water Forum in Mexico, the Local Government Declaration on Water expressed the awareness and responsibility of local and regional leaders concerning water and sanitation.

A Water Consensus for Local and Regional Authorities was adopted at the 5th World Water Forum in Istanbul, in 2009.

Today, returning to Istanbul 5 years after the very first signatory at the Sublime Porte, the World Water Council and partners are coming back with over 1,100 city signatories to launch a global digital platform dedicated to water and cities.

“Strengthening the Istanbul Water Consensus – Partnership and Progress” conference

3rd Istanbul International Water Forum

Press Invitation - 27 May 2014 - 4 to 6 PM - Haliç Congress Centre

Currently, over 1,100 cities, towns, local and regional authorities have committed to improving their water resources and water and sanitation management. They have used the Istanbul Water Consensus as a framework for defining commitments and galvanizing change in their localities. Following on from the launch of the dialogues at the World Urban Forum in Medellin, Colombia in April 2014, this presentation and discussion will build on momentum. It will present examples from signatories and encourage discussion on the challenges and opportunities to improve access to water and sanitation and enable local and regional authorities to develop their role further. It will celebrate the launch of a new online tool for monitoring and benchmarking among local and regional authorities. It will also celebrate new partnerships for realization of a stronger Istanbul Water Consensus.

About the World Water Council

The World Water Council is an international organization that aims at promoting awareness, building political commitment and triggering action on critical water issues by bringing people together, through active hydro-politics, and serving as linkage between stakeholders and decision-makers.

The World Water Council, which has its headquarters in Marseille, France, was created in 1996. It brings together around 300 member organizations from more than 50 different countries.

It represents a multi-stakeholder water community including representatives from intergovernmental organizations, national governments, the business sector, NGOs and water users associations, and academia.

Every three years, the World Water Council organizes the World Water Forum in close collaboration with the authorities of the host country. More than 20,000 stakeholders and decision makers from over 140 countries attended the latest edition, in a joint effort to build strong political commitment. The Council maintains an on-going commitment to ensure the success of each edition of the Forum.

The Istanbul Water Consensus (IWC) is a product of the World Water Council, a unique initiative that recognizes that Local and Regional Authorities are at the center of water management. By providing support and opportunities to exchange, promote and learn, the consensus helps and challenges local decision makers to improve their water management strategies and services in the face of global changes. To date, the WWC has gathered more than 1100 signatories around the IWC.

More: www.worldwatercouncil.org and www.istanbulwaterconsensus.org

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