



# المجلس العربي للمياه Arab Water Council

## Minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Arab Region Coordination Meeting for Preparation of the 5<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum Porto Marina, 20-21 June 2008

### **1- PROCEEDINGS:**

The objective of the meeting was to follow up on the recommendations of the First Coordination meeting held on 13-15 March 2008. The outcomes of the First Coordination meeting was a list of 12 proposed thematic sessions expressing the regional priorities as related to the Forum's themes and topics, issues to be addressed in the regional report, and invitation to the Arab League to coordinate the political process.

The Second Coordination Meeting was attended by 60 participants; mostly conveners and co-conveners of the proposed sessions and representatives of regional and international organizations. *Prof. Ahmet Saatçi*, Vice Secretary General of the Fifth World Water Forum, joined the meeting on the morning of 21<sup>st</sup> June while WWC declined to send a representative to the regional meeting.

The participants expressed their concern about the lack of clarity on how the proposed 12 thematic sessions will be included in the Forum thematic process. The little feedback received from the session coordinators is not helping at all the region to proceed with its preparation, while time available for submission of input became short. *Prof. Saatçi* promised the participants to help in clarifying the situation and address organizational issues raised by the participants. He received a short note summarizing these issues..

A number of representatives from regional and international organizations expressed their interest to join as co-conveners in the 12 proposed thematic sessions.

The participants reviewed the consolidated table of content of the regional report and agreed on the proposed procedure for producing the report. They will inform the AWC Secretariat about their willingness to participate and provide the topics and issues listed in the table of content. Some suggestions were received before the end of the meeting.

The representative of the Arab League informed the meeting about the Meeting of the Arab Water Ministers to be held on 14-16 July at the Arab League Headquarters in Cairo. The meeting will be an opportunity to brief the Ministers on the preparatory process being implemented by the AWC and discuss the plans for engagement of the Arab Region in the Political Process. The President of AWC will attend the meeting in his capacity as the Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation of Egypt.



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At the end of the meeting, a team from NASA made several presentations illustrating the potential of using remote sensing as a tool for improving water resources management and studying climate change. NASA is co-convenor of the session proposed by AWC under topic 1.1 and will be on "*Vulnerability of the Arab Region to Climate Change Impacts and Adaptive Strategies*".

## **2- CONCLUDING REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE AWC:**

We have listened to session conveners and it has been noticed that the preparation level varies considerably. It is clear that the inclusion of our sessions in the Forum program depends very much on how we convince the organizers and topic coordinators of the importance of our suggestions.

We have gone through a long process to choose the topics according to the priority issues within the Arab Region, and we believe that they are of interest to the rest of the world. There are two ways I can suggest to move accordingly and in parallel. The first approach is for us and specially the conveners to start communicating with the topic coordinators trying to convince them that our sessions could stand alone or agree with them on the way of inclusion of our concerns and recommendations on any of the already settled sessions. The second approach should go in a parallel track and establish discussions through the internet on our sessions and recommendations. The outcome of the two tracks depends very much on the degree of details we reach in the preparations for the sessions. We may succeed to include some sessions as "Stand Alone sessions" and include some in the other topic sessions.

From our side, the Arab Water Council contacted the relevant topic and theme coordinators and sent them our sessions suggestions and names of conveners. We have received limited responses, most of them confirmed receiving our suggestions and said that they will contact us later. There have been some active coordinators; as an example is what the coordinators of topic 2.3 have done. They identified the possible interested institutions and suggested sub-topics and session and session leaders and started a dialogue with those leaders and prepared a document on the session material. So, I suggest the following immediate actions:

- Conveners contact topic coordinators
- Conveners use the Virtual Meeting Space
- The Arab Water Council keeps processing and coordinating.

But I must say that the outcomes will depend very much on actions done by the session conveners.



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### 3- NEXT STEPS:

#### A- With respect to the Thematic Process:

AWC will:

- Provide overall coordination and support to all the regional thematic process.
- Coordinate the linkage and interaction between the thematic and regional processes at the level of our region (Report & Sessions).
- Maintain communication with the Program Committee, WWF and WWC.
- Coordinate the preparation of the Regional Report preparation.
- Plan participation in other forum events.
- AWC Secretariat will prepare guidelines for preparation of session content.

Conveners will:

- Prepare a concept note on their session describing their plans to prepare the inputs to their session.
- Outreach to broad group of stakeholders.
- Communicate with the topic coordinators to inform and coordinate the regional input.
- Coordinate regional debate to build consensus among stakeholders about the regional priority, collect information on local experience and action.
- Post their finding on the VMS and initiate and follow up debate with the global community.
- Prepare recommendations on policies and action plans relevant to their sessions.
- Present their final report draft in a special session during the 1st Arab Water Forum, November 16-19, Riyadh, KSA.



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## **B- With respect to the Regional Process**

- AWC will coordinate the preparation of the Regional Report.
- AWC will invite more regional stakeholders to participate in the preparation of the Regional Report.
- AWC will prepare guidelines for preparing the inputs to the Regional Report.

## **C- With respect to the Political Process**

- Ms. Kisa Chahra will communicate and brief the findings and recommendations of the 2nd Arab Countries Coordination Meeting to the Water Ministers of the Arab Countries during their meeting in mid July.
- She will also provide them with all the background of the political process and the schedule of the future meetings.
- She will continue to coordinate the political process in her capacity as the Chief of the Center of Water Studies and Arab Water Security.