

6th World Water Forum

Marseilles Pact of Basin organizations for IWRN at national and transboundary basin level

Gathered in the city of Marseilles in March 2012, we, representatives of river, lake and aquifer basin organizations, from [different parts of the world](#), subscribe to the present **PACT OF MARSEILLES FOR IWRM AT BASIN LEVEL** in view of the development of integrated water resources management at national and transboundary level to meet the challenges of the planet.

PART I – Declaration and call for action of basin organizations

Through this Pact, we recognize that:

- It is becoming extremely urgent to introduce new forms of governance, such as those that were recommended on various occasions at Dublin(1991), Rio (1992), Paris (1998), The Hague (2000), Johannesburg (2002), Kyoto (2003), Mexico (2006) and Istanbul (2009);
- It is suitable to reinforce cooperation between States, through basin organizations, in view of reaching Millennium Development Goals and addressing global changes linked to population growth, changes in eating habits, migrations and urbanization, economic development, climate change and its impact on water resources;
- Concerted management at river, lake and aquifer basin level is a necessity to ensure peace and sustainable development, eradicate poverty, guarantee ecological balances; river, lake and aquifer basins are the relevant territory for the organization of integrated management of water resources, ecosystems, and all activities impacting on water;
- Harmonizing policies and legislations and implementing regional programmes of common interest is a prerequisite to improving basin management;
- It is useful to have and reinforce the federating framework of basin organizations at global and [supra](#)-regional level, in order to support bilateral and multilateral initiatives in their field of competences

Along with our commitment as representatives of Basin Organizations, we call on our national governments and international organizations to:

- Support a process of integrated water resources management based on basins in each country and region where water is shared between different States;
- Elaborate, through a transparent and concerted process, management plans, Basin Master Plans, in order to define objectives to be achieved in the medium and long terms;
- Draft action plans and programmes of measures addressing basins' economic, social and environmental priorities;
- Implement the priority actions required in the water, sanitation, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity sectors, in order to contribute to sustainable development and poverty alleviation.

- In each basin and in collaboration with data producers and managers, organize harmonized and integrated information systems for observation, collection and follow-up of reliable, representative and accessible data and information:
- Value the role of regional cooperation institutions in harmonizing water policies and legislations, and in elaborating and implementing action plans in the water sector and in other fields linked to water

PART II – Commitments of Basin Organizations

Recognizing the urgent need of developing strategies, management plans, efficient programmes of measures, and performance indicators allowing a sound assessment of public policies, we, representatives of basin organizations, signatories of the **PACT OF MARSEILLES FOR IWRM AT BASIN LEVEL**, express our political will to address the challenges, from now on to the extent of our prerogatives;

We are fully committed to improve water governance, facilitate the creation of basin organizations where they do not exist, reinforce existing ones, and help decision makers to orientate policies toward sustainable water management .

This commitment is made in the hope that national governments and international organizations acknowledge the essential role of basin organizations in sustainably managing water resources and implementing sectoral priority adaptation measures and launch the necessary political and institutional reforms.

In order to fulfill our commitment, we will take the necessary actions to

- Develop a sustainable, integrated, participatory approach of water management in basins
- Launch the following actions in our region or in support to other regions on the basis of the guidelines mentioned in the annex:
 - diagnostic of the existing governance and proposals for reforms, including the creation of basin organizations, targeting in particular the challenges linked to climate changes and the potential threats faced by the basin resources at medium and long terms
 - assessment of the situation and elaboration of action plans for strengthening data and information management and enhancement at the national and basin levels
 - analyzing the situation at basin level before elaborating the basin strategy and defining objectives for the joint development of management plans
 - establishing multi-year action plans and assessment frameworks based on appropriate performance indicators
 - facilitating the introduction of a dialogue between all the stakeholders at the national or transboundary basin level, to develop a common vision in order to define the priorities of the basin, which will be at the very foundations of the actions plans to be implemented in the water sectors and in other fields impacting on water;

- - identifying innovative financing mechanisms for sustainable good governance and the implementation of action plans.

We are also fully committed to report, on the occasion of the next World Water Forum in 2015, our actions and to share the progresses made by our basin organizations in the achievements of the actions stated above.

ANNEX: Guidelines for actions

(to be adapted to the local context)

- Governments will make a diagnostic / situation report of the distribution of responsibilities and institutional functions in water management in order to clarify the needs (which functions for each basin organization, which gaps, how to avoid duplication) in view of creating or strengthening basin organizations;
- Governments of riparian States create an international commission, and provide it with a clear mandate, with dedicated financing system and human resources;
- At transboundary basin level and in cooperation with the stakeholders, carry out an analysis on the consequences of demography, land use and economic perspectives, in order to measure the resulting pressure on water resources in the basin and to forecast water availability;
- Identify hindrances to integrated management within the basin area, including sectoral pressures
- Collect data and information allowing forecasts linked with global changes, in particular climate change, in order to establish, at the transboundary basin level and at sub-basin level, likely scenarios and their realistic impacts on the hydrology / hydrogeology of the basin (available quantity and quality versus required quantity and quality);
- Assess the capacity (in terms of human, technical, institutional and financial resources) of existing transboundary basin organizations to establish water scenarios linked to climate changes and other global changes; define options to build these capacities;
- At the transboundary basin level, carry out a study on water vulnerability to pollution and water-related disasters;
- Assess, improve and implement legal frameworks and reinforce the institutional capacity of basin organization and their departments
- Organize the distribution of responsibilities between institutions with regard to the production, management and enhancement of the data required for the management of water resources and water uses.

Targets

Within the framework of their jurisdiction and on a voluntary basis, governments will implement one or more of the following measures, adapting them to the local, national and regional situation.

Examples of targets:

- Introduction of a legal framework allowing the creation of basin organizations at national level by XX
- Establish management plans by XX
- Create national water information systems in each riparian State of the basin by XX
- By XX, provide the basin organization with a mandate to create and manage a water information system at the transboundary basin level

...

Measures

In order to reach the above targets, the following measures could be considered:

Improve planning and development of the territory in order to limit and control the impacts of ongoing changes on flood, river and sea level rise risks in the basin;

Introduce legal provisions for the citizens' participation in the decision-making process of water management at basin level;

Develop and implement programmes of measure regarding flood warning, monitoring and protection, improvement of drainage systems, drought, response to water-related disasters;

Develop and implement action plans and programmes of measures taking into account extreme events and new conditions;

Involve women and young people in risk reduction and water management through basin commission and any other structures in charge of the management and maintenance of water resources;

Promote, through basin organizations, educational and training exchanges, transfers of technology, know-how and good practices in order to ensure sustainable water management, economic development and poverty alleviation.