



COP 22
OUTCOME DOCUMENT OF THE ACTION EVENT ON WATER

November 9, 2016

I. Synthesis of the discussions

The mobilization of the international water community confirmed that the modification of the water cycle represents the primary impact of climate change. Thanks to this general awareness, and to the support of the UNFCCC, a dedicated water day has been included in the Global Climate Action Agenda (GCAA) during COP 22. The participants of this Water Action Day were very engaged in the discussion and the exchanges and were grateful to the UNFCCC and the organizers for this successful event.

The presentations and the discussions were focused on the following themes:

- Water and sustainable development;
- Water alliance with socio-economic sectors;
- Financial mechanisms related to adaptation and mitigation in the water sector, with a particular focus on the African continent;
- Governance and integrated water management in urban areas and river basins;
- Knowledge improvement, international cooperation and capacity building.

The water day was also a good opportunity to present the « Blue Book on Water and Climate », which summarizes the conclusions of the International Conference on Water and Climate held in Rabat on 11-12 July 2016, and to present a number of initiatives launched during COP20 and COP21. The objective was to create greater synergies for both water and climate issues, and to ensure climate justice for Africa. The main initiatives which attracted the most attention and were backed by participants, in addition to being in line with the main conclusions of this Water Action Day, included newly considered efforts in the form of:

- The « **Water for Africa** » Initiative;
- The « **International Network of Parliamentarians for Water**».

A number of other main existing initiatives also evoked their tangible progress since last year.

- The **#ClimatelsWater initiative** has grown to include over 25 institutional members who work collectively to synthesize and echo the same messages for water within the climate arena.
- The “**Paris Pact on Water and climate change adaptation to river basins, lakes and aquifers**” has collected support from over 350 organizations and is in the process of developing dozens of concrete projects in hydrological basins.
- The “**Business Alliance for Water and Climate**” supported over 30 companies to consider the risks and opportunities of water management within their businesses.
- The “**Megacities Alliance for Water and Climate**” initiated the creation of a platform for exchange between 15 Megacities and national governments on the impacts of climate change on urban water.

The participants of this Water Action Day, after a fruitful and rich discussion, have recommended to:

- 1. Recognize that climate change impacts water resources first and foremost;**
- 2. Increase visibility for water within climate discussions at the international level, in particular as it pertains to the implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions and National Adaptation Plans;**
- 3. Launch a water action plan for climate resilience with a specific focus on Africa;**
- 4. Consider the relevance of an IPCC report focusing on water to bring the scientific evidence to decision-makers and send a wake-up call**

5. **Improve access to financing of resilient water management projects for energy, water supply and sanitation, agriculture, cities, and ecosystems, in particular for developing countries, by providing support for the development of credible and bankable projects, robust climate risk assessment processes, and involving the private sector and private finance where appropriate, while taking into consideration social, poverty alleviation, and ecological components;**
6. **Support established principles on resilient water governance and water allocation, which include enhancing effectiveness, efficiency, trust and engagement; encouraging integrated and participatory water management; engaging with underserved groups and ecosystems; and implementing flexible governance mechanisms that can cope with the high levels of uncertainty in future water conditions;**
7. **Improve and share water and climate change knowledge at all levels, in particular through research development and capacity building, with specific attention to gender-disaggregated data and the situation of women and girls;**
8. **Increase resilience to risks posed by water-related disasters, such as floods and droughts, which are exacerbated by climate change;**
9. **Recognize the need to harmonize efforts with the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.**

II. Messages and initiatives to be presented at the High Level Panel

The participants to the Water Action Day will bring to the international water and climate communities and to the Parties of COP the following message: « **Create synergies between the water and the climate arenas, between finance, governance and knowledge as pillars for water security and do justice to the African continent** ».

Thus, the three new following initiatives have been suggested:

- Harmonizing water and climate policies, launching a Water Action Plan for Climate Resilience and implementing the five fingers alliance concept;
- Extending water access and sanitation services in Africa;
- Reinforcing resilient water governance and promoting participatory, inclusive, integrated, and ecological water resources management.

1. Harmonizing Water and Climate Policies, launching of a Water Action Plan for Climate Resilience and implementing the 5 fingers alliance concept

Several initiatives confirmed that climate change impacts water resources first and foremost, and that predicting these impacts for the future is very difficult and associated with high levels of uncertainty, especially for long-lived investments. The need for stakeholders to work hand in hand within the domains of both water and climate becomes even more justified. It is therefore essential to:

- Create synergies and policy coherence between the agendas of climate change and water through formally recognized multi-stakeholder dialogue opportunities where the role of water in the implementation of NDCs can be adequately addressed;

- Implement a priority Water Action Plan for Climate Resilience, which includes the development of water knowledge, decision support, and information systems (WIS) and appropriate financial and monitoring mechanisms;
- Implement the concept of a five fingers alliance between water, energy, food, health and education as social fuel for resiliency.

2. Improving Water Services in Africa

Africa is the second driest continent and is below the world average for most SDG indicators related to water and sanitation. The situation could be worse in the future due to climate change impacts. Thus, Africa is counting on the mobilization of the international community through the « **Water for Africa** » initiative. This initiative, developed from the “Water for Africa” Call launched during the International Conference on Water and Climate, held in Rabat in July 2016, aims to define a priority set of actions that will help improve water resource management specifically within the African continent, while contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

3. Reinforcing effective and resilient water governance and promoting participatory, inclusive, flexible, and integrated water management

Good governance and allocation in the context of climate change means integrated, inclusive, flexible, and participatory resilient water management. With active dialogue and cooperation, these qualities are among the many climate change adaptation measures to consider at the level of hydrographic basins, as well as at other levels, such as cities. In fact, these instruments make it possible to engage at all appropriate levels with different actors in the hydrographic basins (megacities, business actors, NGOs...) to carry out concrete actions for the development, the management and the preservation of water resources and aquatic ecosystems, and henceforth climate change adaptation and mitigation.

This is why it is important to support local authorities and basin organizations in setting up and implementing appropriate instruments of good governance, participation and cooperation.

Urgent political recommended options

- It is essential to recognize that a dynamic, robust vision of water security is the key to address climate change issues;
- Africa as a region must be prioritized for adaptation measures related to climate change and sustainable development;
- Dialogue and cooperation in hydrographic basins can be used to encourage adaptation to climate change within water resource management.

III- Actions to be engaged in short and mid-terms

The water community aims through the Global Climate Action Agenda to raise awareness on the linkage of water and climate issues. This is will particularly be done through creating a space for a dialogue with all stakeholders to support countries preparing and implementing their national climate action plans (NDCs) and addressing water and climate issues. Africa should also be considered as a priority for climate change adaptation and sustainable development, the following measures need to be taken into consideration:

In short term (2017- COP23)

- **Confirm the water action day** on the Global Climate Action Agenda of the COP. Through this action day, the water community will contribute and support formulating and implementing NDCs in the countries;
- **Create**, within the general framework of the Global Climate Action Agenda, a **formally recognized multi-stakeholder dialogue space** for the water international community to maintain the momentum of water between COPs and to prepare the Water Action Day.
- **Support countries**, especially in Africa, **in how to include ambitious, credible, and robust water programs in their NDCs for both climate mitigation and climate adaptation**, and to promote the relationship of water in the NDCs and NAPs with the SDG;
- **Create a water and energy hub** for exchange and capacity building to assist developing countries, African countries in particular;
- **Launch two pilot projects** related to National Water Information Systems;
- Establish **multi-parties dialogues in the pilot hydrographic basins**, in order to identify water related challenges and opportunities for collaboration between local actors and also propose adaptation projects in the water sector.

To ensure the follow-up of these dynamic, the Moroccan Ministry of Water will work on the launch of all these short term actions with the coordination of the COP23 Water Action representatives and all international organizations involved in the water sector.

In Mid-term (2020)

- Elaborate and implement, within the formally recognized multi-stakeholder dialogue space, a priority **Water Action Plan for Climate Resilience**, with specific financial mechanisms and monitoring of commitments;
- Set up a **monitoring mechanism to evaluate progress on commitments** related to water and climate change with an annual review potentially during each COP;
- Because water resources will be affected by climate change, the abilities to attend SDGs, especially SDG 6, will be compromised. Therefore, it is important to **define and implement a priority action plan** in order **to improve water access and sanitation services** mainly in Africa;
- **Promoting expertise and knowledge exchange** related to water infrastructures to cope with the climate change impacts (floods, droughts, natural disasters...).