



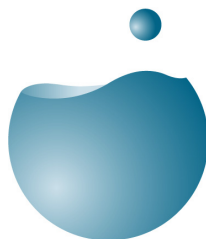
GIVE ME SOME WATER

24th of February 2011, Rome, ITALY

**« ADVANCING THE CAUSE OF
WATER IN THE WORLD »**

By

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World Water Council
World Water Forum

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor and a real pleasure for me to be here with you today and to take part in this conference.

Please allow me first to let you know that **Mr Loïc Fauchon, President of the World Water Council**, has asked me to represent our Council as he is unfortunately not able to attend himself, which he deeply regrets. He wishes a great success to this Study Day that having as theme « **Give me some water** ».

In agreement with the Organizers, my intervention will join a more world logic and will concern the theme « **Advancing the cause of water** ».

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Even though there may not be a shortage of water in the world, not everybody has access to it. Fresh water is spread very unequally over the planet with stark regional contrasts. Less than ten countries share 60% of the world's freshwater reserves and therefore while some suffer from a chronic deficiency, others have endless resources. As far as consumption is concerned, on average an American uses approximately a thousand litres of water a day, a European 250 and an African 50.

THREATS TO WATER

Even though there is plenty of water on the planet, it is not always there where and when we need it.

And even when it is present, the quality sometimes leaves a lot to be desired. **Because water is under attack.** These attacks include population growth, urbanisation, coastal settlement, improvements in the standard of living, pollution and the destruction of natural environments that themselves result in climatic extremes.

A better sharing between water for development and water for nature

At this point in the history of water we are well aware that we are facing major challenges: how to get more water resources and also protect, store and best use them today and tomorrow for future generations. This awareness is recent. It is not only between people that we need to share the use of water, but it is between people and nature that water needs to be harmoniously and yet painstakingly shared.

Water and energy

This is why we urgently need to establish the **link between water and energy more strongly** than in the past.

In reality, producing energy and making water more accessible boils down to the same battle. Throughout the world, it is always the same, the poorest and most deprived who cruelly lack water as much as electricity. And when there is no energy or the tariffs shoot up, it is access to water that suffers.

No water without energy, no energy without water. The

World Water Council stated before Copenhagen, that the future of energy is intertwined with that of water.

And this is why during the preparations for the Copenhagen summit the World Water Council called for us to "establish a much closer link between water and energy". It stated that improve water management is indispensable to a number of future energy solutions. This is why the WWC asked delegates to the December 2010 COP 16 conference in Cancun to treat investment in water infrastructure as a key point of any climate agreement. It is now indispensable to discuss and implement a single "water-energy-climate package".

This new association between water and energy would naturally justifies the setting up of a "World Fund for Scarce Resources" that our Council advocates notably to encourage the production of energy especially dedicated to water.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

"The time of easy water is over": regulating water demand

But increasing the quantity of water available, having enough water for energy and enough energy for water is not enough. We now have to accept that resolving tensions around water resources does not consist solely in increasing the water offer but also on controlling demand.

Controlling demand also means more careful management of dams, purification plants and piping because waste and loss are enormous. Most of all controlling demand means

agreeing on the implementation of long-term measures governing agricultural use of water. Because farming alone uses nearly three quarters of the world's fresh water, one of our main challenges is how we manage rural water resources. We need to increase flow-rates, track down leaks, reduce water loss and use more suitable technology.

The room for improvement is considerable and the cost is not always exorbitant. Put simply, increasing water productivity should not alarm us when it results in less tension about resources.

Under what conditions can we succeed? It may be useful to recall the most important ones here

•Providing the money indispensable for water sanitation. Political leaders should also accept the introduction of facilities to pay for the energy required for water or agree a moratorium on increases in the price of energy for water. Local entrepreneurs like local savings schemes constitute an exploitable avenue if the public accounts for water and sanitation are both independent and transparent and if investing in this field is made both profitable and appropriate.

•Clearly asserting the right of each person to access the resource.

In July 2010, the UN General Assembly has declared water and sanitation as a human right. This resolution represented for the WWC President « a significative step forward towards the right of each citizen of the world to have access to quality water ».

« For almost ten years, our Council has been campaigning in favour of the right to water as an essential element of human dignity. This right is an essential brick in the wall we want to build against ignorance, injustice, poverty, and thirst ».

« Without doubt, one should not limit to expressing the right. Obviously we have to clarify everyone's obligations, starting with the States, but also those of the local communities, and all those in charge of water competence ».

« This is the next step. This is all the things our Council has been asking for – “drinking water before cell phones”, “taps before guns” – , in the previous World Water Fora in Kyoto in 2003, in Mexico–City in 2006, and in Istanbul in 2009 ».

« Every child, every woman, every man on earth is entitled to water and sanitation. This is the right to water. Our duty is to say when, how much, where, and how. Our duty is to implement practical measures ».

Concretely this means that the right to water and sanitation must be incorporated in the legislation of every country. It also means setting up minimum water allocations for the poorest, connecting slum populations to the water and sanitation systems, systematically providing water and sanitation points in all public buildings, particularly schools. Because today half of schools in Africa have no proper toilets. We cannot accept any longer that a school is built without proper access to toilets.

It is through hundreds, and thousands of solutions for water, that the right to water will become reality. Let's hope that all the members of the G8 and G20 along with the entire international community share this conviction and take the necessary actions. The every day life of billions of

individuals, their freedom to feed and care for themselves is at stake here.

•Balance how water governance is distributed between the right institutional levels:

States and international organisations to legislate and monitor compliance with genuinely strategic policies; water catchment areas to bring genuine coherence to the installation of infrastructure to protect and exploit; local level where people know better than anyone how water distribution and anti-pollution should be managed.

Effective water management needs democratic, decentralised institutions and should be based on concerted action to bring water to people, facilitate transparency and ensure that every user is water-responsible and eco-vigilant.

•Transferring and adapting knowledge to the necessities of the poorest regions and countries to achieve general sharing of knowledge about water. Research and development programmes cannot remain uniformly governed by purely geopolitical factors. Several Maintenance Schools have been founded since the Mexico World Water Forum in 2006 where the concept was presented by the World Water Council. In conclusion, this means mustering the willpower and the skill to cope with the increasing number and diversity of water-related natural disasters and their consequences.

•Hydro-diplomacy

In the years to come the international community shall devise a way of working together and of getting organised.

The cause of water will only make progress if we can discuss peacefully and objectively.

The cause of water needs an international water politics strategy and the affirmation of genuine collective responsibility. This is the *raison d'être* of the World Water Council's wish to make its modest contribution to this cause.

The WWC's mission is to gather the main "hydrographic" nations (like China which became a WWC member in 2009).

Last October, the WWC president was received by the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. They discussed different pathways for future collaboration between UN agencies and the water community, especially with regards to upcoming high-level international meetings. The Secretary-General asked the Council to be involved in the preparation for the Rio+20 Earth Summit in 2012 and to ensure that further work is accomplished on green growth in view of the 6th World Water Forum in the same year.

To conclude, a few words on the 6th WWF:

Together, France, Marseille and the World Water Council, have decided to take up the challenge of organising the 6th World Water Forum in March 2012.

This Forum will be “solutions-oriented”. Please do not hesitate to come up with solutions from the ground....

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Finally, I would like to thank you for your invitation and to have allowed the World Water Council to give its vision to advance the cause of the water in the world.