

# Expert Round Table meeting to provide recommendations for preparation of a UNFCCC technical workshop on Water and Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation Strategies

## Report from the meeting

Hosted by the Global Water Partnership

Date: March 9, 2012, Stockholm, Sweden



## Acknowledgements

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At COP17 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in December 2011, there was agreement to hold a Technical Workshop on “Water, climate change impacts and adaptation strategies” during 2012. This report outlines the discussions and contributions made by experts attending the Expert Round Table held in March 2012 to prepare for this forthcoming UNFCCC Technical Workshop.

The Expert Round Table was hosted by the Global Water Partnership as part of our ongoing activities fulfilling our action pledge to contribute to the objectives of the UNFCCC’s Nairobi Work Programme (NWP) on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change.

Twenty one (21) experts from sixteen (16) global and regional organizations working on issues concerning water and climate change shared their knowledge, expertise and recommendations.

GWP would like to acknowledge the voluntary contributions of the organisations listed in Annex 1 that were represented at the Expert Round Table.

Special thanks are due to the representatives of the UNFCCC Secretariat, Lawrence Flint and Rojina Manandhar, who guided the organization and the deliberations of the Expert Round Table, as well as to Prof. Torkil Jønch Clausen who facilitated the discussions. GWP would also like to acknowledge Dr. Mats Erickson (SIWI) and Ms. Anna-Katharina Deinhard (GWP) who took notes of the round table discussions that provided the basis for this report, and all those who participated so actively in sharing their ideas.

We hope that recommendations from this meeting will provide a good foundation for the UNFCCC Secretariat to organize the forthcoming Technical Workshop, ensuring that the Nairobi Work Programme develops a thematic focus on this essential area to better serve the needs of Parties and users.

Dr. Ania Grobicki,  
GWP Executive Secretary

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## Acronyms

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AFDB	African Development Bank
AMCOW	African Ministers Council on Water
CAF	Cancun Adaptation Framework
CI	Conservation International
CPWC	Cooperative Programme on Water and Climate
GWP	Global Water Partnership
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IUCN	International Union for Conservation and Nature
NAPA	National Adaptation Programmes of Action
NWP	Nairobi Work Programme
OWSI	One World Sustainable Investments
SBSTA	Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice
SEI	Stockholm Environmental Institute
SIWI	Stockholm International Water Institute
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA-ACPC	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa - Africa Climate Policy Centre
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WMO	World Metrological Organisation

## 1.0 Background

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An expert round table was held at the GWP/SIWI premises in Stockholm on 9 March 2012 to seek input from international water experts to assist in planning for a technical workshop on water and climate change impacts and adaptation strategies mandated by the COP decision in Durban (Decision 6/CP.17) and further discuss the evolving nature of water issues mandated under the Nairobi work programme (NWP). The objectives of the expert roundtable meeting were:

- To discuss priority themes linking water, climate change impacts and adaptation for the technical workshop;
- To identify and recommend themes and sub-themes for focused discussion during the technical workshop based on gaps and needs;
- To discuss potential outputs and outcomes for the technical workshop;
- To identify challenges in the exchange of information and knowledge between stakeholder groups;
- To discuss needs and opportunities for linkages, collaboration and knowledge sharing within the context of the NWP.

To set the scene, the workshop started off with a background presentation on the status of water under the NWP within the context of the UNFCCC.

### 1.1 Nairobi Work Programme

The NWP is implemented by the UNFCCC under the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA). The objectives of the NWP are to assist all parties in:

- Improving the understanding and assessments of impacts, vulnerability, and adaptation to climate change (CC); and
- Making informed decisions on practical adaptation actions and measures to respond to climate change.

The NWP comprises nine work areas and is implemented by Parties, IGOs, NGOs, the private sector, and community organisations.

The nine work areas comprise: methods and tools, data and observations; climate modeling, scenarios and downscaling; climate-related risks and extreme events; socio-economic information; adaptation planning and practices; research; technologies for adaptation and; economic diversification.

The NWP disseminates knowledge and information on adaptation and highlights work done by partners through a variety of knowledge products and publications in order to catalyze adaptation actions. It also encourages organizations at all levels and sectors to become NWP partners and to make Action Pledges.

## 1.2 Water in the UNFCCC process

Water is addressed in various parts of the Convention. Article 4, paragraph 1(e) of the Convention commits Parties to:

*“Develop and elaborate appropriate and integrated plans for coastal zone management, water resources and agriculture, and for the protection and rehabilitation of areas, particularly in Africa, affected by drought and desertification, as well as floods”.*

Also the Cancun agreement, paragraph 14(a) makes specific reference to water resources, freshwater, marine ecosystems and coastal zones in the context of:

*“planning, prioritizing, and implementing adaptation actions, including projects and programmes...”*

Water is also addressed in National Communications, where all Parties report on measures they have undertaken to implement the Convention and provide information on vulnerability and assessment, climate change impacts and adaptation measures, including those relating to water.

Water is also part of National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs). NAPAs provide a process for LDCs to identify and prioritize actions to respond to urgent and immediate needs with regard to adaptation to climate change. Water is also covered in the work programme on Loss and Damages.

## 1.3 Water in the Nairobi Work Programme

During the 34<sup>th</sup> session of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice (SBSTA), the Parties agreed to discuss the impacts of climate change on water resources and integrated water resources management as an agenda item of the SBSTA under the NWP.

Subsequently a technical paper on water and climate change impacts and adaptation strategies was mandated and made available for the COP 17 negotiations in Durban.<sup>1</sup>

COP 17 mandated the UNFCCC to organize, in collaboration with NWP partners and relevant organizations, a technical workshop on water and climate change impacts and adaptation strategies before the 37<sup>th</sup> session of the SBSTA.

Looking ahead, the 38th session of SBSTA will reconsider the work areas of the NWP with a view to making recommendations to COP 19 on how best to support the objectives of the NWP. This process will further inform the organization of potential future areas of work of the NWP that could further support the scientific and technical work under the Cancun Adaptation Framework (CAF) adopted at COP 16.

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<[http://unfccc.int/documentation/documents/advanced\\_search/items/3594.php?rec=j&priref=600006592#beg](http://unfccc.int/documentation/documents/advanced_search/items/3594.php?rec=j&priref=600006592#beg)>.

The objective of the CAF is to enhance action on adaptation, including through international cooperation and coherent consideration of matters relating to adaptation under the Convention.

## 2.0 Session on Technical Workshop

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### 2.1 Context

The purpose of the expert round table was to brainstorm with international water experts representing different organization, including United Nations agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations on recommendations for planning and organization of the technical workshop on water and climate change impacts and adaptation strategies as mandated by the COP decision under the Nairobi Work Programme in Durban.

In consideration of the huge scope of the mandate that was given in Durban, a need was identified to be selective and prioritize key issues and focus areas for the technical workshop to be more effective.

It was reported that the Technical Workshop would aim to invite 50-70 participants, including Parties, water specialists, and representatives of NGOs, IGOs, development practitioners and the scientific community. The expertise among participating Parties might be different with some being negotiators, some being water specialists and some people having no previous knowledge of water resources management.

### 2.2 Round Table Discussion

The discussions focused on four key issues identified for guiding the organization of the workshop:

- a. Target audience
- b. Potential outputs and outcomes for the technical workshop
- c. Potential inputs and background materials for the technical workshop
- d. Themes for discussion during the workshop and key subthemes



### 2.2.1 Break-out Groups on themes, target audience and outcomes

To allow for more in-depth discussions on the potential themes, target audience and outcomes for the technical workshop, three sub-groups were convened. The 3 sub-groups were requested to consider the following ‘filters’ during the group discussions:

- **Complexity:** *Does our approach provide synergies?*
- **Governance/management/organisation:** *Do the recommendations inform and enable the prioritization and access to resources?*
- **Knowledge:** *What is the target audience? What is the level of dialogue: Does the process develop knowledge sharing and access?*
- **Link to Negotiations:** *How does this inform the UNFCCC negotiation processes?*

Table 1 below shows the issues reported from the group discussions:

Group	Inputs	Outcomes	Potential Themes
<b>Group A</b>		The larger output should be related to infrastructure development factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equity and gender dimensions as cross-cutting themes</li> <li>• Integration of different themes and sectors.</li> <li>• Mainstreaming water into climate change adaptation</li> <li>• Knowledge information systems: How to help parties to make better decisions under uncertainty.</li> <li>• Cost-effective finance of adaptations</li> </ul>
<b>Group B</b>	<p>The technical workshop could be organized around different sector perspectives</p> <p>Champions from non-water sectors to describe challenges and then get water experts to tease out the water dimension</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieving resilience could be the main underpinning platform, and key sectors could for instance be Energy, Health, Forestry, Transport, Education, Urban areas (housing, WASH)</li> <li>• cross-cutting themes could be eco-systems, transboundary, governance, infrastructure</li> <li>• to make things operational: finance and information/knowledge</li> </ul>
<b>Group C</b>	Give examples of implementation packages focused on water (ready to go).	Illustrate linkages between water energy, food, health, security, forests, ecosystem health. Water resources as a key element for sustainable mitigation. Highlight that poor WRM impacts on both mitigation and adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water underpinning all aspects of security and development – Inform negotiators on this critical role.</li> <li>• Key words: security, governance, resilience, ecosystems, uncertainty transboundary,</li> <li>• Enhance understanding of negotiators on linkage of mitigation/adaptation. (Suggestion: water community should also attend mitigation workshops to encourage mutual understanding)</li> </ul>

Table 1: Report from the Group Discussions

## 2.2.2 Emerging potential themes from the group discussion

Based on the group discussions, *security, governance, resilience, ecosystems, uncertainty, transboundary, integration, knowledge and financing* emerged as the main issues for consideration in the workshop.

**Overall, the discussions in the thematic sessions should consider the current global context of climate policy discourse and undertake to inform the negotiation process on key issues related to water resources and climate change adaptation and mitigation, where appropriate.**



The following issues could be considered in developing themes for the workshop: ***indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices; eco-system resilience and natural infrastructure, gender sensitive tools and approaches; adaptation and mitigation co-benefits.***

Further issues that were raised in this context addressed the concern to not only address gender, but also migration as a cross-cutting theme. It was also mentioned that geographical hotspots of climate change impacts need to be included in the discussions.

## 3.0 Recommendations for organizing the technical workshop

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### 3.1 Recommended themes

This section presents a synthesis of the sub-themes recommended for the technical workshop. The sub-themes have been consolidated from the main issues emerging from the round table discussions as well as the feedback from the sub-group discussions.

From the outset, in order to attract experts from “non-water sectors”, it was proposed to invite “champions” from non-water ‘sectors’ such as agriculture, energy, health, industry and others to present their development challenges.



**Proposed themes and issues that could be addressed include:**

- 1. Knowledge and enhancing mechanisms for sharing climate information**
  - ✓ Advocacy and information sharing of knowledge and climate information and services
  - ✓ How to help Parties to make better decisions under uncertainty
  - ✓ Enhance understanding of negotiators on linkage of mitigation/adaptation.
  - ✓ Indigenous knowledge on adaptation
- 2. Financing adaptation**
  - ✓ Financing climate change adaptation of water resources
  - ✓ Focus on finance and the range of related issues
  - ✓ Cost-effectiveness of finance for adaptation
  - ✓ Fiscal tools and rules, financial management, cost-benefit analysis, implications of economics and socio-economics
- 3. Governance, Institutional capacity, ownership and management**
  - ✓ Governance at all scales from community to transboundary level
  - ✓ Mainstreaming water into climate change adaptation
  - ✓ Gender issues
- 4. Linkages between adaptation and mitigation**
  - ✓ with water setting an important example of how the two are interrelated
  - ✓ co-benefits of adaptation and mitigation
  - ✓ Risks of mal-adaptation

## 5. Integration and cross-sectorial approaches

- ✓ Broader development focus: look at water and adaptation from a broader perspective as a cross-cutting resource/dimension
- ✓ Water underpinning all aspects of security and development – inform negotiators on this critical cross-cutting role of water resources
- ✓ Champions from “non-water sectors”, illustrate linkages between sectors: eco-systems, transboundary, governance, infrastructure and key sectors could for instance be Energy, Health, Forestry, Transport, Education, Urban areas (housing, WASH)

## 6. Resilience

- ✓ Achieving Resilience to climate change including building on local indigenous knowledge
- ✓ Adaptation Capacity, Livelihood, Geographical areas (“Hot Spots”)
- ✓ Healthy eco-systems as an underpinning factor for provision, storage and water treatment.
- ✓ Focus on adaptive capacity, resilience and reference to the CAF

## 3.2 Target audience for the technical workshop

The workshop could benefit from participants from outside the water community including:

- Professionals from non-water ministries and agencies such as those from energy, agriculture, health, forestry, environment, finance, foreign and diplomatic affairs, civil society, legal professionals involved in negotiations.
- The Adaptation Committee
- Champions from water using and impacting sectors should be invited with an opportunity for them to present their development challenges as a consequence of the impact of climate change on water resources.
- Strategic partners and representatives from River Basin Organisations
- Regional organisations to initiate regional approaches



### 3.3 Recommended Inputs

The following could serve as inputs for the technical workshop:

- **Case studies:**
  - ✓ Identifying champions from different sectors, whose activities impact and utilize water resources, and asking them to present case studies on their experiences on the development challenges they have to deal with due to the impacts of climate change on water resources. The case studies should tease out the practical development challenges due to the impacts of climate change on water resources, focus attention of Parties on the need for water resources management as a special focus of adaptation, and enhance understanding on the importance of water resources, linkages with climate change and the consequences of poor water management decisions.
- **Background papers for each sub-theme:**
  - ✓ Invite organizations present at the round table to collaborate in teams and prepare background documents for each recommended sub-theme: Resilience, Knowledge, Financing, Governance, Integration, Adaptation/mitigation linkages.

The team could undertake the following tasks related to the sub-theme:

- Undertake a brief analysis/assessment of the current situation in relation to the sub-theme and issues that came out of the recommendations for the workshop.
  - Map, review and assess relevant stakeholders, expertise and information from existing guidance documents, policy briefs, technical papers that could inform the technical workshop
  - Prepare a concise analytical document on a particular sub-theme. The analytical document/s could serve as important background documents for the workshop.
- **Format of the workshop:**
  - ✓ **Key note Speeches** could include:
    - Resilience
    - Water in the negotiations as a cross-cutting resource
  - ✓ **Break out Groups:** It is recommended to have 3 break out groups as follows:
    - **Group 1: Governance and Finance**
    - **Group 2: Integration, adaptation/mitigation linkages**
    - **Group 3: Resilience and Knowledge**



### 3.4 Potential outcomes of the workshop

On the basis of the discussion on themes and target audience, the potential outcomes for the technical workshop could include:

***a. Enhanced understanding of water as a cross-cutting resource (not a sector) and the need for an integrated approach to adaptation***

The workshop should aim to enhance understanding among policymakers on the cross-sectoral nature of water resources across societal boundaries as well as physical administrative boundaries.

Water is a cross-cutting resource that when impacted by climate change affects all other development sectors (agriculture, health, energy and others). Water transcends national political and geographical boundaries and in many cases, water resources are shared by many countries.

Consequently, governance and the transboundary nature of water and climate change need to be considered; adaptation actions that only focus on national geographical boundaries without consideration of the upstream-downstream hydrological and development considerations of shared waters are likely to be inadequate.

This calls for an integrated approach to adaptation. Vulnerability and resilience at the community level should also be considered in an integrated manner.

***b. Making policymakers aware of adaptation mitigation linkages***

While mitigation and adaptation are in practice interlinked, the response measures are often

treated in silos. The technical workshop could serve to enhance understanding on the strong linkage between mitigation measures and adaptation with water serving as one of the fundamental examples. The risks of mal-adaptation should also be highlighted.

For instance, measures to reduce emissions may lead to overuse of land and water for bioenergy, wrongly built hydropower plants can decrease resilience and adaptive capacity of ecosystems and endanger livelihoods of communities.

### 3.5 Collaborative Teams

It is recommended that organizations that attended the Expert Round Table be invited to join any of the Collaborative Teams around particular themes: Resilience, Knowledge, Financing, Governance, Integration and Adaptation/mitigation linkages.

## 4. Session on the Nairobi Work Programme

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### 4.1 Context

The NWP can be seen as a gateway to a group of actors, not only policymakers, but also practitioners and experts, community level policy makers, and others.

The NWP serves as a conduit of knowledge in the negotiation process of the UNFCCC. It is also an instrument to catalyze adaptation actions at various levels of implementation.

Water needs to be addressed in a holistic and multidisciplinary approach. **Knowledge and information sharing** as well as **collaboration mechanisms** are relevant issues for advancing the objectives of the NWP.

In order to further enhance **knowledge sharing** as well as **collaboration** under the NWP, beyond the technical workshop, the following guidance questions were presented to guide the discussions:

- a. Of all existing gaps and needs for action under the NWP, which are the highest priority actions that could be implemented under the NWP?
- b. What collaborative initiatives could be undertaken with relevant stakeholders under the NWP?
  - *...in facilitating actions at different levels?*
  - *...in improving understanding of the policy makers on linkages and complexity of water resources?*

### 4.2 Issues discussed and possible collaborative initiatives

The Expert Round Table came up with the following recommendations for enhancing the

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current role of the NWP in facilitating actions at different levels and **improving understanding of the policy makers on linkages and complexity of water resources.**

- ***Existing initiatives and regional networks can act as a neutral platform for facilitating actions linked to the NWP.***



As water is a cross-cutting resource, the regional networks should include networks focused on water resources, environment as well as those working on non-water specific issues such as those involved in development planning, economics, finance, energy and food security.

Examples of networks include UNDP-Cap-Net, climate change networks such as Global Adaptation Network (GAN), and international/regional stakeholder partnerships such as those by GWP, IUCN, and the Alliance for Global Water Adaptation (AGWA). AGWA is a coalition of partners with interest in the field of climate water and adaptation. One of the active projects at the moment is to find ways to drive mainstreaming. Another is focusing on how to bring ecosystems and infrastructure together. AGWA is working on a shoestring budget, but people are engaged and provide time. UN-Water has great potential as a main coordinating function (WMO General Secretary is currently the Chair of UN-Water).

WMO is leading within the UN system the development of a detailed implementation plan for the Global Framework on Climate Services (GFCS) that will enhance the production, availability and application of climate services in the four priority areas: agriculture and food security, water, health, and disaster risk reduction, particularly in least developed countries, developing countries, Small Island Developing States and landlocked developing countries.

- ***South-south collaboration is important and should be fostered under the NWP building on existing networks and partnerships such as GWP, IUCN, AGWA, and UN-Water to name a few.***
- ***There is a need for the NWP to access more funding.***

Resources for building good networking opportunities are needed.

- ***Adaptation on the ground is often uncoordinated.*** There is a need to foster coordination using existing regional networks and stakeholder partnerships. Solutions are needed to overcome the challenge of different and often overlapping institutional mandates, capacities and legal requirements to implement adaptation activities.
- ***The NWP could play a role in fostering ownership of adaptation*** actions in developing countries.
- ***Appointing water focal points on basin level*** to enhance interactions, discussions and actions at transboundary level, together with the UNFCCC focal points.
- ***The interactive flow of information within the NWP could be enhanced, including utilizing action pledges.*** NWP could also play a bigger role with providing feedback on action pledges.

#### 4.3 Next steps

Invite organizations to join voluntary collaborative teams and the themes for the technical workshop to further advance the work beyond the technical workshop as mentioned in Section 3.3.

## Annex 1: List of participants and contact details

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*Participants and contact details:*

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Name of expert</b>	<b>Contact details</b>
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