

**COP 25/CMP 15/CMA 2 High Level Segment
UN Climate Change Conference COP 25 – Madrid, Spain**

**Statement of
Claudia Sadoff, Director General
International Water Management Institute**

20:00-22:00 on 10 December 2019

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

Climate change brings tremendous uncertainty to our future. But there is a great deal that we know today.

We know that we have failed to mitigate the immediate impacts of climate change and that adaptation is imperative - immediately.

We know that water is the most basic means by which climate change will be experienced - by everyone, through droughts and floods, food and water security, economic prosperity, social fragility.

We know that water will become more extreme, more variable, and more scarce and contested.

We know that water-related extremes – droughts and floods – are becoming more frequent and more severe. To build resilience we must adapt our water governance, information and investment efforts in order to enhance hydrometeorological prediction, preparedness and response, and inclusive remediation following these events.

We know that rainfall is becoming more variable, and that variability equals vulnerability. Among those most immediately affected are smallholder farmers, who manage up to 80 percent of farmland in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. In Africa 95% of farmland is rain fed. Confronted with water variability, each of these farmers, and every mouth they feed, is at risk.

We know that water will be increasingly scarce and contested as rising temperatures make our crops, our industries and our air conditioners thirstier. The tradeoffs among water uses will become sharper, with great potential to increase hardships and inequities and to decrease basic water and food security.

We also know that the brunt of these impacts will be felt most by the most vulnerable, by the poor, by women, and by our ecosystems. And they are likely to be felt most in our poorest and most fragile regions.

We, here today, must tip the scales toward a more purposeful focus on adaptation. The last IPCC Special Report and the report by the Global Commission on Adaptation (to which IWMI was proud to contribute) have forced us to face the fact that climate change will require massive adaptation efforts.

Human security from water-related disasters, food security, and sustainable livelihoods and ecosystems will all rest to some degree on our ability to manage water in the context of climate change.

The International Water Management Institute (IWMI) and our sister institutions of the CGIAR are committed to finding water, land and food solutions for sustainable development in this climate crisis.

Ladies and gentlemen, make no mistake, we are living in a climate crisis. We know we need adaptation and we know that adaptation is impossible without adaptive water management.

Thank you.