



**THIRD SESSION OF THE ISLAMIC  
CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS  
RESPONSIBLE FOR WATER**  
17-19 May 2016 | ISTANBUL

Concept Note on Panel Discussion  
on Water Resources Management Capacity Building

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Istanbul, Turkey  
17-19 May 2016

## 1. Background

Water is one of the nature's precious gifts to mankind. All living things consist mostly of water e.g. the human body is of two thirds of water. Water flows through our planet and through our bodies providing the source of life and the basis for social and economic development. Without water resources and the essential services they provide, achieving sustainable development, public health, food security, peace and human dignity remain elusive goals.

The demand for water in the OIC member countries is steadily increasing and is being spurred by population growth, increasing urbanization, raising incomes, growing economies, and new patterns in consumerism. This new and greater demand for water in the OIC member countries is transpiring when we consider the already limited water resources available in these countries. At the individual country level, the issue of water scarcity in OIC countries is bleak with almost half of them face different levels of water scarcity, namely absolute water scarcity, chronic water shortage and regular water stress. It is also worth mentioning that the pressure on water resources in OIC countries is estimated at 12.2%, a rate which far exceeds the 5.3% observed in non-OIC developing countries and the 9.0% observed in developed countries. This situation indicates the need for utilizing the available water resources in a more productive manner.

Water is one of the most important topics on the agenda of the OIC. The Islamic Conference of Ministers Responsible for Water convenes once every two years. At its first meeting in Turkey in 2012, the Conference adopted the OIC Water Vision, which gives particular attention to building capacity for water security by various ways and means of collaboration at different levels among all stakeholders, including policy developers, planners, regulators, water managers, service providers, contractors, to water users and NGOs, helping countries overcome their developmental challenges and meet their water related development goals.

As stipulated in OIC Water Vision and urged by the same Conference, SESRIC, as a subsidiary organ of OIC, launched a capacity building programme, namely called Water Resources Management Capacity Building Programme (Water-CaB), twinning with institutions seeking support in countries with identified capacity gaps, and facilitating identification of national and regional centres of excellence and nomination of focal point institutions in specific water disciplines. Since its inception, the Programme have played a significant role in enhancing capacities of human resources in the Member States, and in facilitating exchange of knowledge, experience and best practices in the domain of water among, thus contributing to the implementation of OIC Water Vision.

Given the fact that the 57 OIC member countries are dispersed over a large geographical region in four continents, extending from Europe to Africa and from Latin America to

Asia, and, as a group, they account for one sixth of the world land area and for almost one fourth of its population, the need and demand for capacity building of water institutions are huge. However, OIC countries constitute a substantial part of the developing world, and endowed with a high potential in different fields and sectors. Such a state of affairs creates a high potential for utilizing the existing resources and capacities within the OIC community through strengthening technical cooperation within the group of the OIC member countries in water related areas.

Despite certain improvements and successes in OIC region during recent years, member countries are still experiencing many obstacles to benefit in full potential from cooperation initiatives and projects due to a host of factors including supply-side constraints, difficulties in timely adoption of critical changes and lack of adequate human capital. It is therefore important to design innovative support and cooperation mechanisms for capacity building, and a collective and progressive approach, which would address these challenges and enable member countries to reap the full benefits offered by each other in a more globalized and interdependent environment.

It is therefore within this understanding that the panel discussion on “Water Resources Management Capacity Building” will exchange views on ways and means of strengthening technical cooperation for capacity building among relevant institutions in OIC member countries in water related issues, and provide recommendations on some new modalities and approaches for enhancing the activities, while exploring the possibility of partnership in specific activities and programmes with relevant national, international and regional institutions and NGOs.

## **2. Objectives of the Panel Discussion**

The objective of this Panel Discussion will be as following:

- A critique of the current state of affairs, major challenges in water resources management, implemented activities and services in overcoming challenges;
- Exchange of views on ways and means of strengthening capacity building initiatives among OIC member countries in water related areas;
- Providing recommendations on some new modalities and approaches for enhancing international technical cooperation in building local capacities;
- Exploring some scenarios for partnership in specific activities and programmes with relevant national, international and regional institutions and NGOs;
- A future roadmap that prospects more concerted, balanced and effective strategies to design and develop new projects and programs for capacity building for the benefit of institutions in OIC member countries.

### 3. Format of the Panel Discussion

The Panel Discussion will consist of a moderator and four panelists. The moderator will set the overall context, gives floor to the panellist, and synthesize what he/she hears throughout the session to maintain the discussion focused and the themes elucidated. Each panellist will be allocated 15 minutes to give a brief presentation on one of the three themes of the Panel Discussion.

Following the presentations of the panellists, the moderator will open the floor for the Q&A part which will last for 30 minutes. The Q&A part will host interactive discussions that will cover the three themes of the panel discussion. The Q&A will be followed by concluding remarks from the panellists and a quick wrap-up by the Moderator.

### 4. Panel information:

<b>Date: 18 May 2016</b>		<b>Time: 11:30 hours</b>
<b>Moderator: Fadi Farasin</b>		
<b>Rapporteur: Mazhar Hussain</b>		
<b>Session Programme and Speakers</b>		
No	Name	Organization
1.	<b>Dr. Richard Willem Otto Soppe</b>	<b>Senior Scientist - Marginal Water Management International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) P.O. Box 14660 Dubai UAE e-mail: R.Soppe@biosaline.org.ae</b>
2.	<b>Prof. Dr. Hasan Z. Sarıkaya</b>	<b>Former Undersecretary of Ministry of Environment and Forestry Turkish Water Institute (SUEN) Libadiye Str. No:54 Kucukcamlica Uskudar Istanbul e-mail: hzsarikaya@gmail.com</b>
3.	<b>Dr. Yusuf Ben Meir</b>	<b>President of High Atlas Foundation (HAF) 4 Rue Qadi AyaadAl Manar 4A - 3rd floor - Appt. 12 El Harti, Guéliz, MARRAKESH 40.000 – Morocco yossef@highatlasfoundation.org</b>
4.	<b>Mr. Sabri Er</b>	<b>IDB</b>

## **5. Key Questions/Focus Areas to be addressed by Panel Members**

### **1. Dr. Richard Willem Otto Soppe, ICBA**

#### **Water Scarcity and Major Challenges of the Water**

This session will discuss the major challenge in OIC Member Countries as a whole in tackling the causes and consequences of water scarcity, where the total renewable water resources per capita is quite low compared to other regions like Europe, America and Oceania and to the world average.

### **2. Prof. Dr. Hasan Z. Sarıkaya, SUEN**

#### **Methods of increasing water availability in OIC Member Countries**

This session will discuss the methods of increasing water availability in OIC Member Countries, including construction of more water catchment areas, improvement of relations with neighboring countries, build more water treatment centers and constructing more pipes to transport water.

### **3. Representative of IDB**

#### **Water Education and Capacity Building for Water Security and Sustainable Development in OIC Member Countries**

This session will discuss the role of water education and capacity building in providing the knowledge and skills required to face some of the current most pressing water challenges, through a meaningful strategy towards sustainable development.

### **4. Mr Yusuf Ben Meir, HAF**