



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

**Report of the Secretary General
on implementation the OIC
Water Vision**

Introduction:

Sustainable water management, water infrastructure and access to a safe, reliable and affordable supply of water and adequate sanitation services improve living standards, expand local economies, and lead to the creation of more decent jobs and greater social inclusion. Sustainable water management is also an essential driver of green growth and sustainable development.

2. Against this backdrop and in accordance with the OIC Charter and the resolutions and recommendations of the various OIC fora, the OIC General Secretariat has taken steps to promote cooperation among member states in the field of water.

OIC Water Vision

3. The 2nd Conference of Ministers Responsible for Water (ICMW) held in Istanbul on 5-6 March 2012 adopted the OIC Water Vision. The OIC Water Vision gives a brief overview of the diverse water environments across the OIC countries and the different dimensions of water related challenges being faced by them. It recognizes the critical role of the OIC in promoting cooperation among Member States on water-related issues and its ability to bring together expertise from diverse countries with unique water characteristics. The Water Vision not only identifies the opportunities for concerted action but also lays out a roadmap for promoting collaboration, inter-alia, including exchange of best practices, capacity building and knowledge sharing, among Member States in all aspects of water.

4. The 2nd ICMW also adopted, inter alia, the following recommendations for the implementation of the OIC Water Vision;

- a) Requesting Member States to appoint focal points and communicate their contact details to the OIC General Secretariat for close collaboration on water issues.
- b) Requesting the Chair of the Conference to coordinate with the OIC General Secretariat to prepare draft Terms of Reference for the OIC Water Council for the consideration by of the next Islamic Conference of Ministers responsible for Water.
- c) Formulating a funding strategy and mechanisms to support the implementation activities recommended in the Water Vision.

First Meeting of National Focal Points for the OIC Water Vision

5. In collaboration with the OIC Member States and OIC institutions, the OIC General Secretariat is following up the implementation of the resolutions and recommendations of the 2nd session of ICMW. In this regard, in order to facilitate coordination and communications, all Member States were asked to nominate their respective National Focal Points. So far 44 member states have named their National Focal Points.

6. The first meeting of National Focal Points (NFP) for OIC Water Vision was held in Istanbul on 3 – 5 June 2015. The NFP meeting inter alia, discussed concrete follow-up actions in preparation for the Third Conference of Ministers responsible for water.

Terms of Reference for the OIC Water Council

7. In accordance with the decision by the 2nd session of ICMW, the OIC General Secretariat in coordination with the Chair of the Conference prepared the draft Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the Water Council. The draft ToRs were developed by the First Meeting of the National Focal Points. Several participants expressed their observations on the name, composition and the scope of work for the Water Council. The Meeting agreed that that the draft ToRs be uploaded on the web portal hosted by SESRIC for Member States to facilitate further deliberations. The General Secretariat has incorporated the views of member states and the draft ToRs are submitted to the 3rd Session of ICMW for consideration.

Funding Strategy

8. The 1st Meeting of NFPs for the OIC Water Vision considered the funding strategy and mechanisms to support the implementation of the activities which are recommended in the Water Vision in accordance with the recommendation of the 2nd session of ICWM. Given the previous experience, the Meeting recommended to start with projects based on bilateral arrangements on technology transfer, knowledge and experience sharing between different Member States. In-kind assistance between Member States could also be considered to avoid the lengthy procedures associated with the creation of a physical Fund. Further elaboration on this matter will be provided by the Chairman of the Conference for consideration by the 3rd session of ICMW.

Establishment of a web portal on water issues

9. The 2nd ICMW (5-6 March 2012, Istanbul, Turkey) strongly recommended the establishment of a web portal on water resources to facilitate matching of needs of Member States with offers in terms of training, capacity-building, exchange of experience, expertise and technical assistance. In this connection, SESRIC has established this web portal on water resources in OIC member countries and developed a specific water resources capacity building questionnaire for this purpose. The web portal is hosted at: <http://www.sesrtcic.org/oic-water-vision.php>. The web portal inter alia, include:

- a) SESRIC research on water resources;
- b) Links to water statistics and OIC country profiles on water indicators;
- c) Questionnaires on the OIC water vision;
- d) OIC National Water Vision National Focal Points Forum: This aims to provide to provide a platform for experts in the OIC member states to share water related experiences, expertise and best practices among experts.

Defining focus activities and clustering into different areas

10. The 2nd session of ICMW underscored the need for defining focus activities and clustering into different areas (such as food security, climate change, hydrology, water supply and sanitation, river management etc.) In this context, the 1st Meeting of National Focal Points after due deliberation proposed a number of possible clusters. The Meeting agreed to establish smaller Committee comprising a Chairman and two vice Chairmen so as to come up with manageable number of clusters. It was further agreed that the final list would be uploaded on the web portal for member states to make their inputs and to complete a table containing proposed activities, time lines, Key Performance Indicators and implementing partners to implement the proposed activities. Following member states volunteered as Lead Country Coordinators as well as partners in different clusters:

- Sudan: Hydrology — balance of water resources
- Guinea: River basin management
- Gambia: Water Supply and Sanitation
- Tunisia: Sustainable water resources management
- Malaysia: Governance and legal instruments
- Turkey: Use of modern technologies

Mainstreaming of Water issues:

11. The 2nd session of ICMW called for promoting of water issues at the national and international agendas of the OIC Member States. It also called for mainstreaming of water issues by including a specific agenda item on water in the OIC summit Conferences. In this regard, the Final Communiqués of the 12th Islamic Summit held in Cairo on 6-7 February 2013 and the recently held 13th Islamic Summit in Istanbul on 14-15 April 2016 contained several paragraphs regarding OIC cooperation in water resources management. The 13th Islamic Summit, in particular, welcomed the convening of OIC Ministerial Conference of Ministers responsible for water on 17-19 May 2016 in Istanbul and expressed its appreciation for the work undertaken under OIC ‘Water Vision’.

Activities of relevant OIC institutions in the implementation of the OIC Water Vision

12. The 2nd session of ICMW recommended the establishment and strengthening of linkages between centers of excellence among OIC member states working on water issues as well as the relevant OIC institutions. In this connection, the OIC relevant institutions including COMSTECH, SESRIC, IDB and ISESCO have carried out a number of activities and capacity building programmes in the domain of water. Reports submitted by the said institution will be directly submitted to the Conference for information.

Recommendations:

13. To request member states that have not yet named their respective National Focal Points to do so for ease of communication, coordination and follow-up.

14. All stakeholders should share the activities undertaken by them within the framework of OIC Water Vision with the OIC General Secretariat to be recorded for benchmarking and knowledge- sharing.

14. The establishment of the OIC Water Council need be expedited for effective implementation of the OIC Water Vision.

15. Once established, the OIC Water Council should devise funding mechanism for the activities to be undertaken under the framework of the OIC Water Vision, develop implementation plan and make necessary recommendations for consideration of the OIC appropriate organs.

16. Member States and OIC relevant institutions are called upon to make use of the web portal established by SESRIC for promotion of exchange of knowledge, sharing of experiences, capacity building and promotion of dialogue on water issues in the national and international agendas of the OIC Member States.

17. There is a need to engage relevant governmental organizations, education and research institutions, private sector and NGOs in the activities and programmes aimed to implement OIC Water Vision.

18. Member States which have volunteered as lead coordinators for identified cluster should come up with action plan regarding joint programmes and activities they intend to spearhead in their respective clusters.

Conclusion:

20. The above-mentioned and other unrecorded activities within the framework of the OIC-Water Vision indicate that there is a will for cooperation among all the stakeholders to address the common challenges in the domain of water. What is remaining is translating this vision into actionable activities and programmes.

21. It is hoped that the recommendations of the 3rd session of ICMW will clearly reflect the commitment of OIC member states for the promotion of cooperation in water issues among the OIC member states.

OIC General Secretariat

17 April 2016