

UNEP, WMO, UNESCO, FAO, UNICEF, UNDP and UN-HABITAT) who have come together to form UN-Water/Africa and with the support of other non-UN agencies, especially the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) and the African Development Bank.

I am confident that this report will be an invaluable resource for all – policy-makers, technocrats, development partners and other stakeholders in a continent that fulfils the Africa Water Vision 2025.

## PREFACE

The general level of water resources development for meeting the needs of the African populace (for potable drinking, food security and other necessities of human life) is still very low. This situation could be a blessing in disguise if proper policy frameworks for planning, development, and management of water resources in African countries can be devised, taking advantage of the advancement in water science and technology and also the experiences of the technologically-advanced countries through appropriate knowledge and technology transfer mechanisms.

It is well known that the levels of scientific and technological tools for harnessing the resources of water bodies (rivers, lakes, seas and others) have exerted decisive influence on the development of human society and general socio-economic development. It is, therefore, obvious that any accelerated development in Africa would, to a very large extent, depend on how effectively African countries are able to harness their water resources for sustainable socio-economic development and the alleviation of endemic poverty without impairing the environment.

As we observe in this report, the cardinal role of water in socio-economic development has never been as acknowledged as it is today. This positive trend is a result of decades of evolving policies and strategies for effective water resources development and management, culminating in the adoption of the Dublin Principles of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM). These processes can generally be referred to as the “*Water Journey from Rio to Johannesburg*”. It is within this process that the Africa Water Vision 2025 was launched at the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Water Forum at The Hague in 2000. The Vision is:

*“An Africa where there is an equitable and sustainable use and management of water resources for poverty alleviation, socio-economic development, regional cooperation, and the environment.”*

In response to the growing water crisis in the world, the United Nations agencies launched a system-wide project called the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) to develop tools and skills that would foster a better understanding of the basic processes, management practices and policies that ensure that clean and sufficient water is available to all in a sustainable manner. The World Water Development Report (WWDR) was also instituted to publish the main trends and results of this process at regular intervals. WWDR is intended to provide decision-makers at continental, sub regional, regional, national and river basin levels with information that can be used at various levels to govern water wisely. The first WWDR was published in March 2003.

Due to the particular problems of water resources development and management in Africa, the Inter Agency Group on Water in Africa – now referred to as UN-Water/Africa – took a decision in

April 2001, in Niamey, to develop an African Water Development Report (AWDR). The AWDR would afford African countries and other stakeholders the necessary tools and skills to monitor the goals and targets of the Africa Water Vision, concisely formulated as follows:

*Water can make an immense difference to Africa's development if it is managed well and used wisely. Given clear policies and strategies and real commitments to implementation, we can use water to help eradicate poverty, reduce water-related diseases and achieve sustainable development.*

The AWDR is, therefore, intended to be more in-depth and African-owned, but linked methodologically to WWAP to form an integral edition of WWDR. The objectives of the AWDR are to:

- Provide a lasting and durable mechanism to monitor progress made in implementing the Africa Water Vision;
- Provide African decision-makers with an authoritative basis for managing Africa's water resources; and
- Serve as an integrative programme for the strengthening of UN-Water/Africa.

This interim report begins with an introductory section on Water for Socio-economic Development; International and African Milestones; and Freshwater Resources of Africa. This is followed by the main body, articulated along eleven key challenges:

1. **Meeting basic needs:** To recognize that access to safe and sufficient water and sanitation are basic human needs and are essential to health and well-being; and to empower people, especially women, through a participatory process of water management;
2. **Securing the food supply:** To enhance food security, particularly of the poor and vulnerable, through more efficient mobilisation and use of water and more equitable allocation of water for food production;
3. **Protecting ecosystems:** To ensure the integrity of ecosystems through sustainable water resources management;
4. **Sharing water resources:** To promote peaceful cooperation and develop synergies between different uses of water at all levels, within and, in the case of boundary and transboundary water resources, between States through sustainable river basin management or other appropriate approaches;
5. **Managing risks:** To provide security from floods, droughts, pollution and other water-related hazards;
6. **Valuing water:** To manage water in a way that reflects its economic, social, environmental and cultural values for all its uses, and to move towards pricing of water services to reflect the cost of their provision, taking into consideration the basic needs of the poor and the vulnerable;
7. **Governing water wisely:** To ensure good governance so that the involvement of the public and the interests of all stakeholders are included in the management of water resources;

8. **Water and cities:** Covering issues of urban areas and human settlements and their specific challenges to water management;
9. **Water and industry:** To focus on industry needs and the responsibility to respect water quality and take account of the needs of competing sectors;
10. **Water and energy:** To recognize that water is vital for all forms of energy production and ensure that energy requirements are met in a sustainable manner; and
11. **Ensuring the knowledge base:** To recognize that good water policies and management depend upon the quality of knowledge available to decision-makers.

I am grateful to all who collaborated in creating this mechanism for monitoring the progress in meeting the targets of the Africa Water Vision and the Millennium Development Goals. I welcome your feedback and input to guide future editions.

Josué Dioné  
Chairman, UN Water/Africa;  
Director, Sustainable Development Division, ECA

