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World Water Forum : 69 Organizations from the whole World sign the "World Pact for Better Basin Management"

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Initiated by the International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO), its regional networks in Africa, America, Asia, Europe and the Mediterranean, and 12 French metropolitan and overseas Basin Committees, a "World Pact" was signed on Friday, 16 March 2012 in Marseilles by 69 organizations from all continents, including basins involving 33 countries.

The signatories commit themselves to apply in their respective basins the management principles recognized as the most relevant and most effective using the field experience acquired by the INBO member organizations for over 18 years.

They affirm as a prerequisite that the basins of rivers, lakes and aquifers, whether local, national or transboundary, are the suited areas in which organize the joint management of water resources, aquatic ecosystems and all water-related activities in order to cope with the global changes related to rapid world population growth, migration, urbanization, climate change

They encourage the riparian countries sharing basins of rivers, lakes and aquifers to organize joint management, to sign the necessary cooperation agreements and to establish the institutions needed for their application.

They express their will to commit themselves alongside their national governments and international institutions for :

- acting to improve water governance, facilitating the creation of basin organizations where they do not exist, strengthening existing organizations, helping the concerned authorities develop useful reforms and policies for sustainable water management and the programmes needed for their implementation in the field ;

- organizing dialogue with the stakeholders recognized in their basins and their effective participation, to achieve a truly shared vision of the future, to identify the necessary agreements on priorities and the resources to mobilize, coordinate initiatives and projects, analyze the results ;

- based on a prior assessment, facilitating the agreement of the various stakeholders on this "shared vision of the future of their basin" and developing, through dialogue and transparency, management plans or basin master plans for setting out the goals to be achieved in the medium and long term ;

- developing successive action and investment plans that meet the economic, social and environmental priorities of the basins, set out in the management plans, and establishing mechanisms for evaluating their results by using suited performance indicators ;

- making better use of water and ensure low consumption of this scarce resource by better control of the demand, encouraging more efficient uses, and according to the case, the use of unconventional resources, the reuse of treated wastewater or artificial recharge of aquifers for sustainable development in particular ;

- better taking into account the significance of ecosystems and of their services in making decisions for the development and management of river basins ;

- implementing priority actions especially needed in drinking water supply, sanitation, health, energy, agriculture and fishing, waterways transport, protection against risks and biodiversity conservation, thus contributing to sustainable development and poverty alleviation ;

- mobilizing the financial resources in an adequate manner, using mechanisms for guaranteeing their sustainability, for carrying out these governance reforms, ensuring a long-term good basin governance and implementing the stakeholders' action and investment plans needed and ensuring their lasting operation ;

- organizing in each basin, in cooperation with the major data producers and managers, harmonized data

collection as part of Integrated Information Systems, which are permanent, reliable, representative, interoperable and easily accessible, allowing a precise vision of the encountered situations and their evolution ;

- supporting initiatives of regional cooperation institutions for harmonizing policies and legislation in the field of water and for developing and implementing joint action plans particularly at the basin level, and monitoring legal changes, as already done in Europe under the Framework Directive or the Helsinki Convention of 1992 ;

- strengthening institutional and technical cooperation with counterpart basin organizations in their region or other parts of the world, particularly within the existing INBO networks to quickly disseminate best practices, jointly develop innovative solutions and ensure the required training of the various stakeholders involved ;

- organizing better liaison with research organizations to better focus their work on the priority aspects of basin management and rapidly disseminate their practical findings.

The signatories wished that donors would recognize the essential role of basin organizations in sustainable water resources management, by financially supporting projects related to the above commitments and principles.

They also committed themselves to account for their actions and to share the progress made by their basin organizations at the upcoming World Water Forum in 2015 in Korea and to promote the Pact to basin organizations that were not able to come to Marseilles for inviting them to join quickly and also becoming signatories.