PRESENTATION OF THE FRENCH WATER PARTNERSHIP

The French Water Partnership is the go-to platform for all the French water stakeholders, public and private, operating at international level. For more than 10 years, the FWP has been advocating for water so that it becomes a real priority in sustainable development policies worldwide. The FWP also stands as a facilitator for exchanges between the French and international water know-how. Along with its diverse members (government and public institutions, NGOs, organisations and foundations, regional authorities and parliamentarians, economic players, research and training establishments and French and foreign private individuals) the FWP carries collective messages for water within international bodies and networks such as the United Nations, the European Union, and at events such as the World Water Forum, Climate and biodiversity Conventions, High Level Political Forums and the World Water Week in Stockholm.

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8th World Water Forum Brasília-Brazil 2018
Sharing Water

FRENCH PAVILION
The French Water Partnership program and messages

8TH WORLD WATER FORUM,
BRASILIA, 18-23 MARCH 2018

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The Sustainable Development Goals must be achieved

30%
of the world's population and
76% of Sub-Saharan Africa population still doesn't benefit from services that guarantee easy and regular access to safe drinking water (JMP2017)

40%
of the world's population will face water scarcity by 2050
(OCDE 2012)

4,5 billion
people, that is 60% of the world's population, do not have access to safe sanitation services.

72% of the sub-Saharan Africa population does not have access to basic sanitation facilities (JMP 2017)

80 %
of wastewater worldwide is released into the environment without cleanup
(WWDR 2017)

64%
of wetlands have disappeared since 1900
(Nick C. Davidson 2014)

By 2050, 200 million people
could face forced displacement due to climate change
(Norman Myers 2005)

A CONCERNING ASSESSMENT

Human pressures related to population growth, rapid urbanisation and changes in lifestyles are posing increasing threat to freshwater resources. Climate change can intensify the impacts of these phenomena by contributing to the alteration in time and space of the distribution of water resources. From the intensification and frequency increase of droughts, floods and hurricanes to sea-level rise and water quality and biodiversity degradation, the economic, social and environmental impacts of these global changes are felt around the world and are a de facto threat to peace and political stability.

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY'S AMBITIONS

In order to shift the paradigm, States agreed in 2015 upon a universal roadmap – the 2030 Agenda – which sets 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved by 2030, broken down into targets and quantifiable monitoring indicators. Goal 6 dedicated to water is composed of 8 targets: universal and equitable access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene for all, improved water quality, integrated water resource management and restoration of water-related ecosystems, development of international cooperation and strengthened local participation in water and sanitation management. Beyond SDG6, 12 other targets are directly related to water, such as Target 2.4 on the resilience of agricultural systems to floods and droughts, Target 3.3 on waterborne diseases, Targets 11.5 and 11.b on water-related risks in cities or target 14.1 on marine pollution from rivers. SDGs are cross-cutting and will only all be achievable if all water-related targets are met.

This roadmap also echoed two other major international agreements signed the same year: the Paris Climate Agreement and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and resilience building. Water is at the core of these two agreements: 93% of the adaptation components of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) submitted under the Paris Agreement address water and 90% of natural disasters are water-related (WWDR 2012).

The FWP recommendations to achieve the SDGs

The 170 members of the French Water Partnership wish to draw the 8th World Water Forum participants' particular attention on 6 critical points for the achievement of water-related international commitments in view of the forthcoming High-Level Political Forum in July 2018.

It is indeed crucial that the international community as well as all stakeholders (local councils, companies, civil society organizations, citizens, etc.) understand the benefits of sustainable development and act collectively to achieve the set objectives without further delay and in due course: the effective implementation of the right to safe drinking water and sanitation and the sustainable management of resources in a context of climate change. The SDGs' ambition is universal and aims at equity. This requires acting specifically in favour of and paying particular attention to disadvantaged populations.

1

Establishing international water governance: towards the creation of an intergovernmental united nations body for water

There is no intergovernmental negotiating body within the United Nations which provides recommendations on the progress specific to the 2030 Agenda's water-related targets and which suggests corrective measures when needed. Since 2003, UN-Water has acted as an inter-agency coordinator for all issues related to freshwater and sanitation, but it does not have a political mandate. The FWP supports the recommendations of the United Nations Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation (UNSGAB) report on the **necessity of establishing an intergovernmental body within the United Nations** system dedicated to all water-related issues. This body could regularly contribute to the High-level Political Forum's work of monitoring the SDGs' progress. A strengthened UN-Water could serve as its secretariat.

In line with these messages' environmental aspect, the French Water Partnership supports the Global Pact for the Environment, an initiative led by the international legal civil society, supported and carried out by France at the United Nations.

2

Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the 2030 water-related targets

The High-level Political Forum (HLPF) will be held in July 2018. It will assess the progress on the implementation of several SDGs, including the 6th SDG for water. The members of the FWP would like to seize this opportunity to recall that:

• **The States' political will to reach water-related targets is a fundamental prerequisite** for the success of the 2030 Agenda: ensuring access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, fighting against pollutions and water-related risks (floods, drought etc.), safeguarding food security, preserving the quality agricultural land, sustainably sharing resources between different uses, preserving water-related biodiversity and strengthening human and societal resilience. To achieve the SDGs, these issues need to be taken on at both State and local level and local participation in decision-making – especially of young people and women – is essential.

• **An international monitoring system (such as the HLPF) based on reliable, ambitious and inter-sectoral international indicators** and informed by national data is needed to measure progress made in each country and aggregate it at global level. States must make a real effort to **improve the quantity and quality of the national data collected, as well as to enhance and encourage sharing this data**, particularly in developing countries: **financing knowledge improvement** (investment in networks and maintenance, implementation of water information systems, etc.), **capacity building and awareness-raising among stakeholders**. In many countries, efforts to **train, educate and raise awareness** on water-related issues are regular or strong enough in light of existing issues.

• **States must transparently report back on their progress** in implementing the SDGs for water and sanitation, within efficient and inclusive national and international **accountability mechanisms**.

3

Sustainably and equitably sharing water resources between its different uses in a context of growing pressure

While the quantity of quality freshwater available is decreasing, resource-sharing between different uses (drinking water, agriculture, energy, navigation, etc.) is becoming more complex.

SDG target 6.4 reminds us of the need, by 2030, to "substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater [...]". However, the associated international indicator measures the state of water stress, but it does not reflect efforts to improve the sustainability of water management nor does it measure overexploitation of resources.

In this context, **the FWP's members support multisectoral and territorial approaches for sustainable management and a smart use of resources that take into account issues related to water, energy, food security and waste management from source to sea**. Saving water, strengthening water-use efficiency and preserving groundwater resources should be strongly encouraged. Where possible and sustainable, the mobilization of new resources may be considered, depending on issues specific to each basin and territory. The establishment of multi-scale integrated water resources management (IWRM) systems – which imply participative and multi-stakeholder governance – makes concerted decisions between communities, industrialists, farmers, associations and the State for water resource management and sharing possible.

There are more than 260 rivers and 592 aquifers in the world shared by at least 2 countries. The lack of cooperation between countries sharing the same basin can lead to regional imbalances and even conflicts. It is therefore necessary for **stakeholders to place transboundary basin management at the heart of their concerns** and for cooperation structures between States to be established, in line with the principles fixed by the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (1992), the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (1997) and the 63/124 Resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on the Law of Transboundary Aquifers.

4

Raising the funding to meet the set objectives

Achieving the SDGs water targets requires much more funding than today. The priority given to climate finance should not hide this reality. The World Bank estimated in 2016 **the need to multiply by 3 current funding to achieve universal access to drinking water and sanitation services**. Governments will have to count on complementary sources of funding and allow project developers – particularly local councils – easier access to this funding. Various sources of funding are to be favored by choosing those that are best suited to each situation according to the 3T principle (tariffs, taxes and transfers).

Additional funding from foreign governments and bilateral and multi-lateral international financial institutions will not suffice to raise the necessary funds. It is first and foremost essential that national governments encourage local economic development by mobilizing national funding. This can be done by developing upstream-downstream relations between all water users through the polluter pays principle, for example.

In addition, respecting the 2030 Agenda's principles of equity and universality implies redirecting international aid – namely development aid – primarily towards disadvantaged regions (Least Developed Countries, in urban but also in peri-urban and rural areas) and predominantly in the form of donations. The aid paradigm will also need to be broadened and taken one step further, from providing infrastructure to implementing services to sustainable management which includes knowledge, improving the quality of knowledge, capacity-building, institutional support and good governance.

In certain disadvantaged regions, knowledge transfer and sharing relating to simple technologies can also lead to sustainable and low-cost results, adapted to local context and situation.

5

Developing environmental, social and technological innovations to achieve the SDGs' water targets

Nature-based solutions are defined "actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural and modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits" (UICN, 2016). Along with more traditional – or grey – solutions, they are essential to meet water-related Sustainable Development Goals. They are often cheaper and can simultaneously increase climate risk resilience, play a role in protecting and restoring biodiversity and soils, and address other development challenges such as drinking water, food security, human health, sustainable cities, tourism and land neutrality degradation. Their full implementation requires fast research and innovation research development.

Social innovations can also help meet water-related SDGs by addressing development and societal challenges while protecting access to resources and ecosystems. These social innovations require taking into account the socio-economic characteristics of populations (income levels, gender role distribution, customs, relationships between different generations, etc.) as well as their perceptions, understandings and uses of water. An example of such a social innovation is the social pricing of water, which consists of a progressive water tariff dependent on income and household size.

Research and innovation related to methodologies and technologies must be significantly strengthened in order to face today and tomorrow's challenges: massive ground truth and remote-sensing data acquisition and exploitation (soil, space), local energy recovery and production (wastewater, water turbines etc.), development of smart cities, climate services strengthening, reuse of treated wastewater for irrigation, artificial groundwater recharge, drainage water recycling for agriculture or biodiversity, industrial water recycling, etc. Major research programs are needed at regional, national and international level.

The FWP's members encourage taking into account innovative solutions in addition to traditional solutions which in many cases enable problem-solving – rainwater harvesting, simple groundwater-detection, construction of boreholes or toilets etc. – and are sometimes more adapted to local challenges and contexts. In any case, adequate public and private funding, capacity-building, knowledge sharing and developing as well as tools for monitoring and evaluating co-benefits and project efficiency are much needed. These solutions can also be implemented through decentralized cooperation and collaborative innovation.

6

Responding to emergencies and building resilience

In humanitarian emergencies (natural disasters, man-made crises and epidemics), supply of drinking water, access to sanitation and good hygiene practices – all essential elements for life and human health – can be disturbed or even interrupted, with dramatic consequences for the victims and delays in reaching the SDGs. The Sendai Agreement and SDG 11 go beyond crisis management by addressing the very issue of territorial and human resilience.

In light of this, the FWP's members support:

- **Increased action to prevent and forecast water-related crises** by developing warning systems to build the resilience of populations, territories and infrastructure;
- An **immediate response, funded and coordinated by different stakeholders**, to ensure access to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene for all those affected by the crisis, but also respect for international law and the right to water and sanitation, particularly for refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced and repatriated persons, and the integration of this response into risk management;
- An **approach based on cyclical risk management**, which creates a crucial link between emergency responses, participatory and sustainable reconstruction and long-term development.

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