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Integrated Water Resource Management**

Margaret Catley-Carlson
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**Integrated Water Resource Management
Making it Happen:
What will it take
The role of the Global Water Partnership**

Thank you – for inviting me, and for organizing this professionalization seminar in this vital subject. It is a daunting task you have given me – to speak after dinner 4 days into the meeting, to talk to a group a good deal more expert in the subject than I am, and to follow several days of *really* expert people in this subject.

I haven't been with you for the past few days, but I am willing to wager that there was a common message in what they told you – and I dare say, in your discussions. And it is this:

Meeting demands for water will increasingly depend on non-structural solutions – in particular, rethinking the demands and current uses of water. The solutions to current and coming crises will not for the most part be found in new and extraordinary technological advances. Instead they will be found through changing our attitudes and ways of using and managing water.

This only leaves two questions.

- How to make that happen?
- What kinds of policies, organizations and management instruments will be needed?

Since we are talking about use patterns that have persisted since time immemorial, since we are up against some very pervasive cultural beliefs and myths, and since, as Mark Twain observed “of course water flows uphill; it flows toward power”, this task is not going to be simple. But we think it is do-able, at least in good measure.

Before we plunge into the intricacies of integrated water resource management, we should spend a moment or two realizing why it is so difficult to achieve. What we are talking about is changing Water Governance. Water Governance today in most countries tends to reflect religious, social and ethical views including that:

- The best way to guarantee that all have water is to provide it free of charge;
- There must be primacy of private property rights;
- Man's role is to be the master of nature,
- Nature always restore itself;

- Constant economic growth and industrial expansion will bring general good.
- All nations must grow their own food
- Water governance is sectoral
- Governments know best and can be trusted to act in the best interest of all
- Governments should themselves deliver water to their citizens

(It is a very familiar list of sins!!)

These precepts served some handsomely. But they no longer serve the water world well. You know as well as I that water tables are declining; many rivers no longer reach the sea. More than 1b people do not have consistent access to freshwater and more than twice that number lack access to sanitation. Freshwater aquatic species are in peril. Deltas and wetlands are disappearing. Aquifer water levels are falling. Water quality everywhere is in decline, nowhere more so than in the burgeoning cities of the developing world where the major part of the world's population will live after the first decade of the 21st century.

And close to two billion additional inhabitants of the planet will be born, primarily in areas already experiencing water and food stress. The same water needed to feed people is needed to allow them to drink. Governance precepts are going to have to change and change quickly.

In fact, the growing consensus among those who study water and work in the field runs in quite other directions from the traditional

- Governments may not be the best managers of water delivery; once public authorities have established the policy and regulatory framework, the private sector may have a role that improves overall performance markedly – even for poor people.
- Governments are the ultimate authority but people need a much stronger voice in deciding about water use – and unless the voices of all who use and are affected by water use are heard, the right solutions are unlikely to emerge.
- Nature can no longer restore itself – the disappearance of wetlands, and habitats and species attests to this fact.- if humanity's role is to be master of nature, we haven't done well of late.
- Not all nations can grow all of the food they need. Some will need to import this form of 'virtual water', and we need to rethink the trade regimes and guarantees that will ensure that this happens.
- Constant economic growth, where not accompanied by appropriate pollution regulation and enforcement – has devastated water supplies, and imperiled rather than safeguarded the future.
- Poor people may well need subsidies to meet their water and sanitation and livelihood needs – but their drinking water and sanitation and livelihood needs for water will be better met when direct users rather than the general taxpayers pay the costs and maintenance of water systems and the associated resource costs- as quickly as possible incorporating an opportunity cost element and environmental costs too.

There is more and more conviction that new ways must be found, and growing legitimacy for a broadly drawn roadmap of necessary changes. These were given voice by the World Water Commission and the report of the Vision Unit that reported to the Hague Conference 2000. (Maggie, sorry to say so, but in fact the FFA was developed in closer collaboration with the Vision Unit than with the Commission!) The accompanying document to that Conference was the Framework for Action or FFA – a visionary statement put together after dialogue from most (not all!!) regions of the earth, enriched by several months continuing conversation after the Hague Conference. The Global Water Partnership - in the regions and countries, and through a central unit - wrote the FFA. It is our proposal for a roadmap to achieve the Vision.

Here are some of the basic questions raised when we pull these new precepts together; they require pervasive and significant change in water management – the instrument is *integrated water resource management*. You have probably had more than one definition of this during the past week – in our books it is

A process which promotes the coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources in order to maximize the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without comprising the sustainability of vital ecosystems.

Here are some of the basic actions as we approach this new form of water governance:

- We must put IWRM into practice at different levels from national through basin/aquifer to community levels
- We must balance the eco-system approach with national water governance ie allocate water between users and to the ecosystems in an effort to achieve sustainable development and reduce poverty.
- We must devolve responsibilities to water users: reforming and increasing the capacity of government structures to manage water sustainably and involve communities in the decision making process.
- We must strengthen the management of shared waters: protecting the rights of upstream and downstream users and brokering agreement on the use of shared waters – or even better: the sharing of benefits from optimal basin water use.
- We must reform and develop institutional frameworks, and build capacities in these institutions: governments must become effective regulators by tackling the weak institutional and legal structures in many countries.
- We must realign economic and financial practices: water pricing mechanisms – whether to charge, what to charge and how to charge – have to be worked out and the role of the private sector and water markets determined.

It is very clear that one size is not going to fit all. The actions that suit one country or region may not suit another. But all of the issues have to be addressed. And as scarcity and crises increase, more countries are asking how they can address them.

But how do we make change happen? Twenty years ago very powerful aid agencies –

like the World Bank – or USAID, or a coalition of donors might have decided that adopting new principles was going to be part of the cost of increased aid in this sector... that worked, but only up to a point. The Bank has been advocating water pricing for decades, with very little result. There is no UN organization for IWRM (in fact too many for water!), although Agenda 21 Chapter 18 sets out a series of principles not far from the above. Most often there is no Ministry or Apex body to co-ordinate Water activities within countries – like this one. Departments and ministries are left to cooperate according to national tradition. Clearly, new forms of international organization are going to be needed to make this happen. One of the organizations working to make this happen is the Global Water Partnership.

The GWP exists to create and accelerate the global movement towards practical implementation of the IWRM concept and principles. We have no major water projects, no funding for water programs. We have existed only since 1996 when Ismail Serageldin for the World Bank, together with the UNDP and Swedish Government brought us into being. Now the UK and Dutch governments are the main contributors for a core budget (the budget is exclusive of the AP's) that is looking at about \$10 million this year. We are a reinforced network, which in turn is building a network of information and ideas. We have an HQ staff of 10, plus 3 resource centers in Copenhagen, Wallingford and Colombo – with maybe a fourth coming along in Spain, and a part time Chair in New York. Indeed in many respects we are a virtual organization that helps to keep us lean and hungry. Our most important strengths and 70% of the budget goes to our regions and country offices – I will talk about them very shortly.

Here's what we do -

- We recognize that there is a wealth of experience worldwide in actions, investments, policies and approaches that can be used for improving water resource management, held variously by practitioners, policy makers, theorists, experts and users of water –
- We realize that not all these groups can be aware of all the options.
- We build and encourage regional and national structures to implement the concept.
- We make linkages between various national dialogues on water policy. Added value of GWP – bringing together all stakeholders – NGOs academics etc all together –.
- We have 9 regional entities at the moment: one full fledged regional water partnership (in Southern Africa) and eight so-called Regional TACs or Technical Advisory Committees. They will probably transform into full Regional Water Partnerships in the future.
- Each one of these is directed by a part time regional coordinator – in South East Asia, South Asia, Southern Africa, West Africa, Central Europe and the Mediterranean, Central and South America and (since November 2000) in China. During 2001 GWP will study other forms for the establishment of IWRM platforms in Central Africa and in Central Asia, and maybe the Southwest Pacific.

- There is a high degree of autonomy – movement to self sufficiency
- Each region – to a greater or lesser extent is working on four major thrusts which we see as the key to IWRM
 - Establishing partnerships and mobilizing political will
 - Building strategic partnerships for action
 - Promoting good practice in IWRM
 - Developing and promoting regional actions.

As well, we have about a dozen so-called GWP Associated Programs – which are autonomous programs that address important cross-sector and IWRM issues, and not “just” strictly sub-sectoral themes.

- some of them have been identified from the water use sectors “water for people” (e.g. Water and Sanitation Programme, African Water Utilities Partnership, WUP etc.), and “water for food” (e.g. Water Conservation in Agriculture and Rainwater Harvesting),
- the main thrust of the development of Associated programmes is on programmes which provide strategic services to practitioners trying to implement IWRM - such as
 - our IWRM capacity building programme (CAPNET at the center,
 - WATERNET in Southern Africa and more regional networks on their way);
 - River Basin Organisation Programme (in close cooperation with the International Network of River Basin Organisations, INBO);
 - the Gender and Water Alliance;
 - the Groundwater Management Programme (GW-MATE, in close cooperation with the Netherlands-World Bank Partnership) and the recently initiated Flood Management Programme.

How do we work?

These are some of the activities:

- Work with partners to advance the debate on several of the most important outstanding issues building on debates in regions and countries.
- Support debates on regional priority issues to get a more cross-sectoral approach based on the Regional Vision to Action process.
- Advance the debate on controversial issues by providing a platform for discussion (e.g. initiating first meetings, commissioning short studies or ensuring different and opposing groups are part of any debate and involving front-line policy makers, help the preparation of agendas for the debates, and provide an information base).
- Provide inputs to help achieve informed debate e.g. through submissions of experts, and in some cases, act as a neutral player to organise specific roundtables or workshops.

And as we have gained experience, we have developed some strong mechanisms

- A Toolbox for IWRM that is designed to provide practical information and guidance on how to put integrated water resources management in place in the real world. It concentrates on the “three pillars of IWRM” as we see them:
 - *The enabling environment* – the general framework of national policies, legislation, regulations and information for water resource managers;
 - *The institutional roles and functions* of various administrative and water basin levels and stakeholders, and
 - *The management instruments – or tools* - which are needed for effective regulation, monitoring and enforcement
 - Most importantly, through concrete case studies throughout the World, it will be developed to show where these tools have been used, and what have been their strengths and limitations..

How does GWP fit with other organizations?

- Members- water departments, ministries, NGOs, professional associations, environment groups, CP members
- Many UN orgs are members - UNDP was a co-founder! WMO is actually one of the best, having several AP's with us. UNEP is very friendly now, and so is WHO. FAO etc full partners – others suspicious, have difficulty (probably happier with government focused programs)
- close collaboration with the WWF process – previously Hague and the Dutch, now Kyoto and the Japanese
- still working on our relationship with the World Water Council – we see them as having an important political advocacy role complementing our advocacy/action role with actors in the sector
- Good relationship with the World Bank – their new sectoral expertise work is being actively disseminated through the GWP regions.
- - Private sector – some – still a weakness

Disadvantages?

- Are there disadvantages to working with a GWP engagement?
 - There could be some additional bureaucratic levels to work through, but GWP is NOT “bureaucratic”,
 - There could be some loss of control over project content in return for getting a more universal approach,
 - There might not be an immediate fit with USAID budget/management/reporting frameworks, etc..

How can USAID and GWP collaborate? Clearly I am here because I want to encourage the USAID, both centrally and in the field to seek creative ways to engage with their respective Regional/Country Water Partnerships

- We need direct support from USAID – core support would be great
- We need funding of regional groups for example the UK financing the China development and Denmark is playing the financial support role in Central Asia.

- We need financing for AP'; the Japanese now finance the Flood Management Programme as their first financial support to GWP
- We particularly need good US examples and US financial support for the IWRM ToolBox material – there is no country with such a wealth of excellent experience and expertise. (including some illustrious cases of good “bad” examples!)
- The US has comparative advantages in a number of water management fields in which you may help us both with the Toolbox and with the development of AP's. One such example – “conflict resolution”. Another, which is now becoming active, is “drought management” in which we plan collaboration with a global drought management network out of Nebraska.
- In short we need USA to take a more active interest via GWP in our regional work.

WHY should you collaborate via GWP? A reasonable question

- USAID would find it advantageous to channel or coordinate a new or existing activity in water *through the GWP*, rather than just designing and implementing water-related projects on their own.
 - You definitely get enhanced leveraging and
 - donor coordination,
 - ready-made forum for information exchange and dialogue with other programs,
 - greater opportunities for replication; etc),

To sum up: GWP

- Is a network, more than an organization
- Is not another funding mechanism or clearing house for projects.
- Is not a competitor to existing structures
- Works without complicated procedures, important committees and sub committees, protocol, and grand titles
- Is a group of people from all over the world who promote Integrated Water Resources Management, at global, regional and country level
- Is a group that addresses Governments, Business, NGO
- Is a place to bring the various water communities together (agriculture/irrigation, nature conservation, poverty eradication, urban development, hydrological modeling communities, among others

Is a place that relies on vision, influence and expertise, not on money or decision making powers.