

# GROUNDWATER GOVERNANCE TOWARDS GLOBAL ACTION



While groundwater use has increased manifold, with major socioeconomic benefits, little attention has been given to its governance and to resource conservation and protection.

Rather widely groundwater has in effect been abandoned to chance, intensifying extraction and increased pollution.

Good groundwater governance is required to provide the right environment to facilitate sustainable management.

Groundwater extraction  
over the past 50 years  
has increased by more than

300%

1960

2010

IN MANY LOCATIONS THE CURRENT LEVEL OF GROUNDWATER USE IS SIMPLY NOT SUSTAINABLE

Groundwater levels are declining in several of the world's intensely used agricultural areas and around numerous mega-cities

Given the major concern about the future of groundwater, the **Global Environment Facility (GEF)** and the **UN Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO)**, together with the **UNESCO International Hydrological Programme (IHP)**, the **International Association of Hydrogeologists (IAH)** and the **World Bank**, have initiated a major program to review and strengthen groundwater governance, through production of a Global Diagnostic, a Shared Vision and a Framework for Action.

The objective of the project is to embed a process of **improved groundwater governance to halt the current trend of resource depletion and degradation and lead to positive environmental, social and economic outcomes.**

This initiative involves authoritative institutions and renowned experts and aims to bring groundwater high on the political agendas.

**GOOD GOVERNANCE CAN REVERSE THIS TREND**



Groundwater Governance  
A Global Framework for Action



## GROUNDWATER PROVIDES:

DRINKING WATER TO AT LEAST  
**50%**  
OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION

**43%**  
OF ALL OF THE WATER  
USED FOR IRRIGATION

GROUNDWATER sustains the baseflow of rivers & aquatic ecosystems

### Outputs of Global Governance Program

The project team has worked together with groundwater stakeholders worldwide in a series of five regional consultations. The experience gained is being synthesized in a **Global Diagnostic**. The next steps then comprise the development of a **Shared Vision** (including generic guiding principles and processes for effective groundwater governance) and a **Framework for Action** (with context specific policy, institutional and investment options).



**GROUNDWATER**  
PROVIDES A UNIQUE BUFFER DURING  
**EXTENDED DRY PERIODS**  
AND THEREFORE IS A  
**CRITICAL RESOURCE**  
FOR ADAPTATION TO  
**CLIMATE VARIABILITY**  
AND **CLIMATE CHANGE**

Following the Regional Consultations, a large number of groundwater practitioners and stakeholders are participating in a **Permanent Consultation Mechanism (PCM)** to incorporate additional local experience and expert input. The PCM is open to interested organizations and individuals. To request membership in the PCM, visit: [www.groundwatergovernance.org/permanent-consultation-mechanism/pcm-contact-form/en/](http://www.groundwatergovernance.org/permanent-consultation-mechanism/pcm-contact-form/en/)

For more information on the Groundwater Governance project visit: [www.groundwatergovernance.org](http://www.groundwatergovernance.org)

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