

Taking account of the many contributions received in the Virtual Meeting Forum, or sent directly to the session coordinators, by the 190 session stakeholders, some interim findings & recommendations, which will be revised after the Sessions in Istanbul, can be summarized in a few findings and a few recommendations as follows:

- [FINDING] Strong political will and long term commitment are pre requisites for sustainable basin management and transboundary cooperation in the face of global changes

- [FINDING] Significant progress has already been made since the 1990s with reforms undertaken in many regions and countries around the world. The gained experience allows now to say that integrated water resources management at the level of river and aquifers basins is a real advantage. These experiences allow proposing guidance to countries which want to implement efficient basin management and reinforce their transboundary cooperation

- [RECOMMENDATION] The progress made so far is insufficient to meet the requirements of a globally changing world. Adaptive strategies focused on maintaining the integrity of river basins and aquifer systems should become the norm in national and international policy. This will require:

- 1) Surface water to be managed in river and lake basin units and groundwater to be managed in aquifer systems units – where the two resources are used together, they should be used conjunctively;

- 2) Essential quantitative and qualitative information on resources, their uses, polluting pressures, ecosystems and their functions, the follow-up of their evolutions, risk assessment and financial challenges to be obtained and made accessible. This information should be used as the objective basis for dialogue, negotiation, decision-making and evaluation of undertaken actions, as well as coordination of financing from the various donors;

- 3) The participation in decision-making of the concerned Governmental Administrations and local Authorities, the representatives of different categories of users and associations for environmental protection or of public interest. This participation would be better organized in Basin Committees or Councils.

- 4) Focusing on long-term objectives of achieving river basin water resource integrity, based on well conceived management plans or master plans that are implanted in given time horizons;

- 5) Significant increase in training and educational programmes for responding to the adaptation needs in cooperation building and basin management;

- 6) Mobilization of financial resources to suit the different and diverse needs of countries based on their socio economies, cultural priorities, and geopolitical considerations. Therefore, it is necessary to set up everywhere complementary funding systems that are based on the participation and common cause of the users. Water charges mechanisms established for basin management can enable the use of the polluter-pays and user-pays principles and may have an interactive effect on consumption reduction and pollution control.

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- [RECOMMENDATION] As global inventories of transboundary basins, transboundary aquifer systems and their technical and social peculiarities become clear, through the global programmes supported by PCCP, World Water Assessment Programme, ISARM, EU-WFD, EUWI, INBO-AP, the GEF and others, available conventions and agreements should be ratified by the riparian States. Furthermore cooperation agreements need to be crafted at global and basin and aquifer level to achieve necessary and sound cooperation. Similarly adapted cooperative institutions such as basin organizations should be created to nurture transboundary cooperation and strengthen communication and dialogue among users.

- [RECOMMENDATION] Existing and developing international legal instruments and adapted tools and experiences concerning transboundary water resources management should be further disseminated through efforts of agencies and networks, promoting cooperation around water resources River Basin's Organizations and their networks.