



ICIMOD



## World Water Day, 2018 - Nature for Water

on 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2018 at PCRWR, Headquarters, Islamabad

### Concept Note

#### 1. Background

Each year, World Water Day highlights a specific aspect of water. The theme for the year 2018, “Nature for Water” provides an important opportunity of exploring nature based solutions for various water challenges. This theme is closely linked with Sustainable Development Goal 6 “ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all by 2030” which explicitly talks to halve the proportion of untreated wastewater and increase water recycling and safe reuse.

Water is not only a life sustaining resource but also accounted for social well-being and economic prosperity. It plays an important role in managing healthy ecosystem. Besides the fact that plenty of water is found on the surface of earth, only 2.5% is available as freshwater. The floods and droughts are considered as major water challenges for 21<sup>st</sup> century globally. The phenomenon like global warming and climate change further aggravates towards the severity of these challenges. The climatic analysis dictate that the amount of rainfall has been increased annually however, the rainfall is mostly not available when it is critically required for crops to grow healthy. On contrary, the heavy rainfall triggers flash flooding which not only damages infrastructure, property and crops but unrecoverable loss of important lives of people. The tsunami and other recent flooding events happened in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and China are the worst examples of these disasters. It is believed that the proper exploitation of this huge potential could help in mitigation of drought prevalence conditions.

The environmental damage together with climate change is driving the water-related crises which we are facing around the world. The protection of watersheds reduces the risk of ecosystem degradation in terms of providing clean water at downstream. The degradation of vegetation, soil, rivers and lakes directly impacts floods, drought and water pollution. In the context of food security, the role of ecosystem services is very crucial. It is now time to focus on to explore nature based solutions which have great potential to salve the complex water related challenges. There is a need to emphasize more for the promotion of green-infrastructure approach which has the revolutionary benefits for

human beings in sustainably managing the environment and ecosystem as a whole. The concept of this year theme, “Nature for Water” promotes planting new forests, reconnecting rivers to floodplains, and restoring wetlands will rebalance the water cycle and improve human health and livelihoods. The adoptability of such approach will provide integrated and visible benefits of nature to people in the form of availability of abundant food, clean water and healthy air.

Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) along with its supporting partners (ICIMOD, ECOSF, CCRD, UNESCO, IUCN, ICARDA and Riphah International University) has planned to convene World Water Day on March 20, 2018 along with poster competition related to the theme. The event will provide a platform for exchange of experiences and dialogue to address water issues.

## **2. Objectives**

The intended objectives of the event are:

- Knowledge sharing and skill enhancement on water issues.
- Sensitization on nature based solutions.

## **3. Intended Participants**

Around 80 participants will be invited from among decision-makers, water experts, students, institutions, community members and youth etc. The participants will be invited in consultation with the collaborating partners.

#### 4. Program

Time	Activity	Presenter/Guest
0930 –1000	Registration	PCRWR Headquarters
<b>INAUGURAL SESSION</b>		
1000 – 1005	Recitation of Holy Quran	Verses Related to Water
1005 - 1010	National Anthem of Pakistan	
1010 – 1015	Welcome remarks	Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, Chairman, PCRWR
1015 - 1020	Remarks	Dr. Abdul Majid, Country Representative, ICARDA
1020 – 1030	Remarks by Guest of Honour	Lt. General Omar Mahmood Hayat, Chairman, NDMA
1030 – 1040	Address by Chief Guest	Ms. Vibeke Jensen, Director, UNESCO Islamabad
1040 - 1140	<p>Panel discussion followed by Q&amp;A: Nature for Water</p> <p>Moderator: Dr. Ashfaq Ahmad Sheikh, DG, PCRWR</p> <p>Question 1: How healthy eco-system is essential for sustainable development and management of water resources?</p> <p>Question 2: How water users are damaging the eco-system?</p> <p>Question 3: How preservation of eco-system can build resilience towards water related disasters?</p> <p>Panelist:</p> <p>Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro, President, ECOSF            Mr. Ahmed Kamal, Chairman, FFC            Dr. Abdul Wahid Jasra, Country Representative, ICIMOD            Dr. Ghulam Rasool, DG, PMD            Mr. Hassan Muhammad Khan, Chancellor, Riphah International University            Mr. Mahmood Akhtar Cheema, Country Representative, IUCN</p>	
1140 – 1145	Poster competition / result announcement / souvenir distribution	Dr. Toqeer Ahmed, CCRD, CIIT, Islamabad.
1145 - 1150	Group photo	
1150 - 1200	Refreshment	