



Think Water! Find Solutions!

**The Water Leaders Forum:
Regional Engagement and Innovation from the Arab World**

Abu Dhabi, July 11th, 2010

Influential decision makers in the Arab World's water sector, with partners from the global community, will come together in a high level forum to develop 21st century innovations and solutions to water challenges in the Middle East and North Africa.

The driest in the world, the Arab region has well identified, well studied and well researched its water challenges. Water security is declining as countries are unsustainably and inefficiently using more water than what is available. There are growing new complex connections between water, energy, climate change and food security. Fast growing populations, increasing affluence, economic growth and diversification place new demands on water.

It is time to develop and deliver the solutions - to secure the water future. Supporting leaders who can champion strategies for change; equipping managers with the latest knowledge, experiences and skills; and engaging the public to support change. To look beyond borders, engage and find regional solutions. To build momentum for change.

Solutions mean realizing that the best engineers in the Arab World can take on the technical challenges but decision makers must find the financial, social, economic and cultural solutions. Innovation means engaging with new partners, looking at cutting edge programs and policies and understanding that policies that deal with energy, trade, agriculture, real estate and social protection might have more impact on water management than those championed by water related Ministries. Engagement means completing needed changes and overcoming political opposition to reforms.

Convened by the Arab Water Academy in Abu Dhabi, and coinciding with the celebration of the second anniversary of its establishment, the Water Leaders Forum will assemble 15-20 distinguished participants with high level contributions from Arab ministers from the water sector and associated fields, such as energy, agriculture and finance. Opinion leaders from the public and private sectors, as well as leading figures from regional and international organizations, will also participate in this forward looking leaders' dialogue.

Three distinct sessions will be held at the Water Leaders Forum:

Innovative Solutions from the Arab World: Securing Water Futures – Led by the President of the World Water Council, Mr. Loic Fauchon and the Chairman of the Arab League's Water Ministers Council, this high level panel of Ministers and decision makers from the Arab world

plus global leaders will outline and discuss new solutions to water issues and bring their perspective on how the necessary political decisions will be made so that reforms take place and outline their commitment to innovation and solutions.

Agents of Change in the Arab Water Sector – How to create the learning programs so that the current and new generation of leaders in the water sector have the knowledge, skills and abilities to manage the systems and solutions that will be created and develop a forum for the policy decisions that need to be made. Led by the Director of the Arab Water Academy, Prof. Asma El Kasmi and the Rector of UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education, Prof. Andras Szollosi-Nagy this session will look at the policy discussions that need to take place and capacities that need to be built for 21st century water decisions makers.

New Horizons, New Partners, New Solutions – A private high level leaders lunch that looks at the issues that must be answered if the Arab World wants to secure sustainable and integrated water management. What perspectives can the private sector, other countries experiences and international organizations provide; how have others used a scientific and evidence-based approach to water policies and what are the social and behavior changes needed to ensure reforms in the water sector. CEOs from the private sector in Australia and Singapore and water experts from the World Bank will outline their experience.

The Water Leader's Forum will lay the groundwork for a secure water future in the Arab World. Results will be used in developing the capacities of new leadership; in establishing the forums where policy, politics and possibility can be discussed; where decision will be made and innovations explored. It will start to build regional solutions based on local experience and develop the road for the Arab World's inputs to the 6th World Water Forum to take place in March 2012.

Think Water! Find Solutions! Be part of the water future in the Arab World.