



World Water Council
3rd World Water Forum

Forum Bulletin

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3RD WORLD WATER FORUM HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 20 MARCH 2003

Participants to the 3rd World Water Forum (3WWF) continued to meet on Thursday in Kyoto and Shiga. In Kyoto, dialogues concluded on Agriculture, Food and Water, and Water and Poverty. Discussion on Water, Education and Capacity Building, Dams and Sustainable Development and Financing Water Infrastructure began. The introductory ceremony of the 3WWF in Shiga took place in the morning, opening two days of 3WWF in that city. Discussions began on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and Basin Management, and Water for Peace, and the Children's World Water Forum opened.

Delegates to the Ministerial Conference continued deliberations in the Senior Official's Meeting, discussing the revised draft Ministerial Declaration.

OPENING CEREMONY SHIGA

Ryutaro Hashimoto, National Steering Committee of 3WWF, outlined improvements in the management of Lake Biwa over the past thirty years. René Coulomb, WWC, said international organizations must encourage common management of transboundary water resources, and develop a mechanism to facilitate the peaceful resolution of water conflicts. Princess Takamado of Japan emphasized that water should be managed at the basin level with cross-border cooperation. Mikhail Gorbachev, Green Cross International (GCI), stressed the need for political will to the WSSD's commitments, urging participants to develop implementation mechanisms and proposals for action. Yoshitsugu Kunitatsu, Governor of Shiga Prefecture, said that future generations should inherit "mother Lake Biwa" undamaged.

WATER AND POVERTY

NGO PANEL DISCUSSION ON WATER AND POVERTY: Chair Jon Lane, Building Partnership for Development in Water and Sanitation (BPD), said that discussion would focus on input to the Ministerial Declaration.

On public participation, Anna Tzvetkova, MAMA-86, called for an international convention on information access and public participation. Salathiel Nalli, Evangelical Fellowship of India Commission on Relief, recommended that at least 20% of expenditures on water management projects be allocated for capacity building. Seidy Salas, Voces Nuestras, called for governments to maximize public participation. Tubtim Nattaya, National Schemes Sanctioning Committee, emphasized the need to ensure that community representatives actually represent the community.

On PPPs, Joanne Green, Tearfund, remarked that governments have failed in delivering services to the poor and called for widespread reform. Rocio Bustamante, Centro Agua, noted that many developed countries keep their water services under public control. On financing, Belinda Calaguas, WaterAid, urged governments to double their investment in water. Rosemary Rop, Maji Na Ufanasi, said that financing must be considered on a case-by-case basis and from economic, technical and social perspectives. Ilya Trombitsky, Biotica, recommended integrating water issues

into general policies of sustainable development. Desta Demessei, Ethiopian Kale Heymet Church, suggested focusing on low-cost technologies.

Regarding water as a human right, Hilda Coelho, Centre for Rural Systems and Development, said that governments, water providers and international organizations should guarantee basic water needs. Meena Palaniappan, Pacific Institute, emphasized the need to declare a formal, legally-binding human right to water and called for mention of the human right to water in the Ministerial Declaration. Sindi Ngcobo, Network for Advocacy of Water Issues in Southern Africa, called for channeling revenues from intensive water users into water services for the poor.

Discussion: Participants reviewed a number of issues, including accessing information from private companies, the IMF and World Bank, and the need for governments to increase their fiscal budgets for water.

CHANGING POLICIES AND IMPROVING GOVERNANCE FOR WATER SECURITY FOR THE POOR: This session was organized by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and chaired by Peter Rogers, GWP. Barbara Schreiner, South African Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, noted that South Africa's constitution enshrines the right to sufficient water. Roger Fitzgerald, WaterAid, spoke on delivery of sanitation in low-income rural areas in India, noting the challenges of creating demand for sanitation and securing sufficient financial and human resources. Ratna Reddy, Center for Economic and Social Studies, noted that watershed development is necessary, but insufficient to eradicate poverty in many regions in India. Alain Mathys, Suez Group, described a PPP pilot project on the delivery of water and sanitation services to Brazil's poor.

Ma Zhongya, China Environment Department, noted substantial impediments to sustainable water use in Northern China, including pollution and unsustainable agriculture. Kaoru Hayashi and Naoko Shinkai, Japanese Bank for International Cooperation, discussed an irrigation infrastructure development project in Sri Lanka that reduced poverty by enhancing permanent income and reducing expenditure risk. Albert Wright, GWP, said that IWRM helps provide a framework for solving socioeconomic problems.

Discussion: Panelists noted opportunities for private provision of water services to informal settlements in circumstances where public provision is politically unfeasible because it amounts to recognition of slum-dwellers' ownership of land.

WRAP-UP PLENARY: Chair Wouter Arriens, ADB, highlighted several issues discussed in the Water and Poverty sessions, including the need to: improve water governance; empower poor communities to take charge of their development; and form effective partnerships. He said partnerships should prioritize people's needs. Shireen Lateef, ADB, outlined the Water and Poverty theme statement, which notes the role of water management in reducing poverty and conserving and sustaining the natural resource base, and recommends developing pro-poor partnerships for water security. One participant expressed disappointment with the statement and the "closed process" that led to it. Chair Arriens said the process had become an "extensive consultative process" and said that comments not incorporated in the draft would be submitted as an annex.

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John Sousson, ADB, John Lane, and Peter Gleick, Pacific Institute, members of Water Words, announced personal commitments to deliver 1000 "water libraries" - books and materials on water supply and sanitation to communities. Gerard Payen, World Business Council for Sustainable Development, noted the strong business case to support urban water infrastructure and water services.

John Sousson, introduced the ADB's Rural Water and Poverty Action Initiative, highlighting its focus on "putting principles into action," and announced the launching of the Knowledge and Advocacy Partnership. Alain Henry, French Agency for Development, presented a project focusing on the sustainable management and maintenance of rural water systems in Mali. Vanessa Tobin, UNICEF, said 213 children from 33 countries are attending the Children's World Water Forum. Ryan Hreljac, Ryan's Well, presented his work on financing water wells in developing countries. Blessing David, Child to Child Network, said the lack of water resources prevents girls from attending school and called for participation of children in decision making. Agnes van Ardenne-van der Hoeven, Dutch Minister of Development Cooperation, called for political commitment, shared responsibility and PPPs. Highlighting the Water for Asian Cities Programme, Anna Tibaijuka, UN-HABITAT, stressed the importance of water demand management. In his closing remarks, Tadao Chino, ADB, emphasized the role of water management in poverty eradication.

AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND WATER

AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND WATER IN AFRICA:

Organized by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Japan Green Resources Corporation (JGRC), the session was chaired by John Caldwell, Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS).

Pir Mohammad Azizi, Afghanistan's Vice-Minister of Irrigation, Water Resources and Environment, said agriculture is the mainstay of Afghanistan's economy and highlighted plans for a river basin approach to water resource management. Kwaku Owusu Baah, Ghana Irrigation Development Authority, stressed the role of irrigation in enhancing food security and work productivity. Noting the failure of previous investments in large irrigation projects, he described two ongoing small-scale schemes with community-based farmer participation and poverty alleviation components. Stating that water is the limiting resource in semi-arid zones and noting limitations of conventional agriculture in these climates, Constance Corbier Barthaux, French Agency for Development, explained how conservation agriculture in Africa can be profitable and sustainable.

Hiroshi Okudaira, JGRC, and Amidou Sangare, Mali Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, reported on the outcomes of a recent workshop on technical guidelines for combating desertification developed through a 16-year JGRC study. Presenting on guidelines for rural development methods in Africa, Naoko Toriumi, International Development Center of Japan, highlighted different types of rural livelihoods and capital arising from variation in the availability and accessibility of water. Sharing lessons learned, she emphasized the importance of building ownership and regular follow-up in promoting autonomous, self-governing rural development.

In summarizing the presentations' recurring themes, Caldwell underscored the need to combine "hard" technical and "soft" social solutions in addressing agriculture in semi-arid regions.

IRRIGATION TECHNOLOGY, A KEY ELEMENT TO WATER CONSERVATION: Thomas Kimmell, Irrigation Association (IA), chaired the panel of speakers from IA member organizations. He said agriculture represents the highest proportion of freshwater use, and therefore provides the greatest opportunity for water conservation.

Dominic Longo, Valmont Irrigation, said businesses can offer solutions to food and water scarcity. He stressed that modern irrigation should be based on demand management, and said technologies can be pro-environment, pro-development, pro-poor and pro-profit. Thomas Spears, Valmont Irrigation, contrasted strengths and weaknesses of subsurface drip and mechanized irri-

gation systems. He stressed that lack of capital keeps developing country farmers from acquiring more efficient irrigation technology.

Augusto Póvoa, Rain Bird International, presented three case studies from developing countries that demonstrate how simple changes can increase efficiency. He said most farmers are not aware of more efficient technologies. Terry Rahe, Cascade Earth Sciences, underscored that reusing water is an important way to conserve water and urged partnerships for developing policies and technologies to capture used water. Rahe stressed consideration of the social, economic and environmental implications of technology.

Discussion: Participants raised questions about how technology can be applied to small-scale and subsistence farmers. Chair Kimmell noted that the large-scale irrigation industry serves commercial agriculture, but not subsistence agriculture. Panelists agreed that the Forum provides an opportunity for businesses to forge links with NGOs who have experience with small-scale irrigation.

WRAP-UP PLENARY: Chaired by Louise Fresco, FAO, the wrap-up plenary heard outcomes of the Agriculture, Food and Water sessions. On the historical perspective on water communities in monsoon Asia, participants called for recognition of the diversity of irrigation practices. On water as a source of food security, delegates emphasized the need for greater investment in irrigation modernization, adoption of IWRM, stakeholder dialogues and long-term programme funding. On the use of effective micro-organisms (EM) in organic farming, participants recommended that EM be identified as a pro-environment technology for sustainable food production. They committed to enhancing knowledge and disseminating technologies.

Participants discussing water productivity in agriculture and irrigation externalities, called for raising awareness on positive externalities and the multifunctional roles of irrigation. On water for food and rural development, delegates supported taking an integrated water resource development and management approach to food production, building more dams for irrigation, and increasing arable lands by rehabilitating wasteland and recycling water. On ecological diversity sustained by rural water and water quality conservation, participants recommended the harmonization of agricultural development with environmental conservation and the establishment of new institutions and technologies to this end. Delegates discussing the sustainable and efficient use of water and irrigation systems called for a shift from the traditional participation of farmers in government projects to the participation of governments in farmers' projects.

Participants at the session on integrated management of water with a human face stressed recognition of challenges faced by communities devastated by HIV/AIDS. Delegates discussing participatory management of irrigation systems, water utilization techniques and hydrology, stressed support for capacity building in farming communities, and for incorporating participatory approaches into planned irrigation projects. Participants discussing the expansion of scope of international water discussions based on diversity and multi-functional roles of irrigation, called for a database of experience on paddy rice cultivation and appropriate technologies, and recommended enhancing research and development in arid-zone irrigation. Delegates deliberating on agriculture, food and water, highlighted the challenge of achieving autonomous, farmer-centered projects in partnerships with experts and government. Reporting on irrigation technology, an irrigation specialist noted that industry possessed the technology and know-how to improve yields with less water, but not the decision-making power to help the poor.

Discussion: Participants raised concerns regarding ownership of irrigation systems and problems caused by large-scale agriculture, and suggested including the following issues in the draft statement: emphasizing ecosystem functions of agriculture; promoting environmentally-friendly technologies; controlling population growth; and addressing the global shift to non-vegetarian diets.

INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND BASIN MANAGEMENT

OPENING PLENARY: Chairing the plenary, Torkil Jønch-Clausen, GWP, emphasized the need for recognition of the basin as the chief unit of water management. Margaret Catley-Carlson, GWP, stressed the need for consideration of economy, equity and ecosystems and environment. She highlighted key aspects of IWRM, which include: national and regional plans; partnerships across ministries; capacity building; and increased financing. Ronnie Kasrils, South African Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, stated that women and youth are the best community motivators. He said water catchment management begins at the household level, and moves up through village, basin, and national levels to the international level. Sven Erik Jørgensen, International Lake Environment Committee (ILEC), said existing knowledge is sufficient, and action under feasible and sustainable management plans is now needed. Atsushi Shimokobe, former Japanese Vice-Minister of the National Land Agency, outlined how attitudes toward national land management have shifted to acknowledge the importance of basin conservation in Japan.

Pierre Baril, International Network of Basin Organizations, noted the range of legal systems under which water basins are managed, highlighting key elements of successful systems: participative management systems; information distribution; value attribution; and democratic political processes. Emphasizing that water is key to economic growth, Ian Johnson, World Bank, called for innovative approaches to increase investments and for policy and institutional changes.

USING THE IWRM TOOLBOX TO ASSIST PREPARATION OF NATIONAL IWRM PLANS – PRACTICALITIES AND EXAMPLES:

Chair Margaret Catley-Carlson opened this session, organized by GWP, by launching Toolbox Version 2. Torkil Jønch-Clausen introduced the toolbox as a dynamic compendium of practical knowledge and experience, freely accessible on the internet. Several GWP representatives presented their experiences. In developing IWRM, Athenare Compoaré and Daniel Adom, West Africa, advocated, *inter alia*: commitment and stability; participation and cooperation; and information dissemination through effective communication strategies. Maureen Ballasteros, Central America, commended the policy, legal and institutional frameworks provided by the Toolbox. To achieve effective implementation, Shen Dajun, China, identified a need for technical training and institutional development, and Bruce Hooper, Australia, stressed building partnerships across regional administrations and adapting tools to specific circumstances. Simon Thuo, East Africa, identified mechanisms to avoid causing contention among stakeholders, including establishing: a common language; a level playing field; trust; a framework for interaction; and role and issue definition. Simi Kamal, Asia, highlighted the challenge in persuading people to think cooperatively. Harry Liiv, Estonia, said small municipalities should unite to attract large international financing packages. Three presentations focused on the contribution that the Toolbox has made to capacity building in Slovakia, Malaysia and Southern Africa.

WORLD'S LAKES AND FRESHWATER CRISIS: SHARING KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCES AND VISION FOR LAKE BASIN MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES SUPPORTED BY GEF:

Thomas Ballatore, ILEC, chaired this session, organized by the World Bank, Lake Biwa Research Institute and ILEC. Alan Hurdus, USAID, emphasized the need for collaboration to protect the world's lakes and freshwater resources. Akinori Ogawa, Japanese Ministry for Environment, advocated cross-sectoral partnerships to improve global freshwater management. Toshinori Ogata, Shiga Prefecture, outlined the multidisciplinary approach taken in managing the resources of Lake Biwa. Stephen Lintner, World Bank, recommended that policies be informed by sound analysis and stakeholder participation. Alfred Duda, GEF, stressed the critical role of lakes in storing freshwater and achieving the MDGs, particularly in light of climate change. Marjory-Anne Bromhead, World Bank, outlined developments in the management of Lake Ohrid, lauding the permanent cooperation mechanism established between Macedonia and Albania.

Akira Nishizawa, Japanese Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, noted the increasing pressures on Lake Biwa from urbanization and industrialization in the last century and outlined key elements of the Lake Biwa Comprehensive Development Program. Noting that pollution, biomass burning and erosion have depleted the quality and biodiversity of African lakes, Eric Odada, University of Nairobi, said management of catchment areas is inadequate. He highlighted the need for institutional capacity building and transparent funding in African countries. Yatsuka Kataoka, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, stated that while introduction of IWRM has begun in Asia, knowledge gaps remain concerning appropriate actions and policy tools. Rafik Hirji, World Bank, highlighted key aspects of the successful management of Lake Chilika, including stakeholder participation, political support, scientific foundation for actions, cooperation between management agencies, and application of a range of solutions.

WATER FOR PEACE

OPENING PLENARY: This session was convened by UNESCO and GCI, and co-chaired by Andras Szöllösi-Nagy, UNESCO, and Bertrand Charrier, GCI. Noting that ineffective water distribution and management are at the basis of the water crisis, Mikhail Gorbachev, GCI, underscored the need for water access for all and new water consumption patterns. He called on governments to ratify the UN Convention on Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses and proposed establishing a special fund supporting developing countries in solving water problems. Stressing the Arab world's opposition to a war on Iraq, Mohammed Elyazghi, Moroccan Minister of Territory Planning, Urban Management, Housing and Environment, highlighted the importance of peace in the Arab world to enable Arab countries to jointly manage water resources.

Jean-Michel Cousteau, Ocean Futures Society, said solutions to water problems are not lacking, but rather the willingness to act. He identified reducing water consumption and implementing the use of water-saving technologies in agriculture as priorities in addressing water problems. Expressing disappointment at the failure of the international community to avoid war, Szöllösi-Nagy noted that war is the ultimate defeat of humanity. He emphasized the need for political will, financial support and specific commitments to address the water crisis. Charrier said aspects of peaceful transboundary water utilization include: balancing competing uses of basin resources; acknowledging that upstream water development affects downstream users; and improving knowledge on the causes of conflicts.

FROM POTENTIAL CONFLICT TO COOPERATION

POTENTIAL: WATER FOR PEACE: This session, convened by UNESCO and GCI, split into four discussion groups: origins of water-related conflicts; tools for resolution and prevention of conflicts; incentives for cooperation; and conclusions on the water for peace debate. The first two discussions took place on Thursday, 20 March, and the remaining two will take place on Friday, 21 March.

Origins of water-related conflicts: This session was chaired by Munther Haddadin, former Jordanian Minister of Water. Aaron Wolf, Oregon State University, said that upstream and downstream interests are not necessarily incompatible. He questioned the perceived dichotomies between: reasonable and equitable use and the obligation of not committing harm; and between unilateral development and integrated water management. Bert Keijts, the Netherlands' Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, noted that aspects of Rhine management cooperation between basin States included jointly adopting an agenda for discussion, finding a mutual approach to problem-solving, and setting realistic goals. Mithat Rende, Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, outlined aspects of cooperation with Syria on the management of the Tigris River and expressed regret over Iraq's lack of political will to join the cooperation initiative.

Haddadin emphasized that conflict leads to a "zero-sum game," and that cooperation is mutually beneficial. Gabaake Gabaake, Okavango River Basin Commission, spoke on cooperation in the integrated management of the Okavango River basin.

Participants outlined water conflicts in the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Discussants examined the challenges of cooperation in managing the Tigris River, and agreed on the importance of stakeholder participation in water management.

Tools for resolution and prevention of conflicts: This session was chaired by Jerome Delli Priscoli, US Army Corps of Engineers. John Selborne, UNESCO, stressed that long-term solutions to conflict must be based on justice and equity. He noted that best ethical practice for conflict resolution includes transparency and partnerships. Salman Salman, World Bank, outlined provisions relevant for dispute settlement and prevention in the UN Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses, and noted that emphasis should be on conflict prevention for reasons of equity, efficiency, sustainability and cost.

Joseph Dellapenna, University of the Pacific, said there is a legal basis for a human right to water but noted that various governments reject this claim. Shammy Puri, International Association of Hydrogeologists, said transboundary aquifers require sustainable joint management as aquifer depletion impacts, though subtle and gradual, are serious. Yona Shamir, Israel Center for Negotiation and Mediation, said that water conflicts can and should be resolved through alternative dispute resolution (ADR) approaches and stressed that education is central to conflict resolution through ADR. Pieter van der Zaag, University of Zimbabwe, said there is a need to educate water managers as conflict preventors. He explained that new water managers should have basin-wide and multi-sectoral understanding, and analytical and process-oriented skills. Ousséni Diallo, Green Cross (GC) Burkina Faso, outlined a GC project in the Volta River basin that aims to encourage States to adopt a basin management plan and ensure public participation.

Participants debated the entry into force of the UN Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses and the codification of its provisions in customary international law.

DAMS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

OPENING PLENARY: The opening session of Dams and Sustainable Development was organized by the UNEP Dams and Development Project and chaired by Benedito Braga, Brazil's National Water Agency. Mahmoud Abu-Zeid, WWC, noted that the growing global population necessitates the building of more dams to meet agricultural, domestic, industrial, energy and flood-control needs. He stressed the need to consider how dams affect livelihoods, environment and existing rights and access to water.

Regarding water storage, Raymond Lafitte, WWC, supported the construction of dams for water storage and hydropower, stating that rain harvesting for irrigation and solar and micro-hydro electricity can only make a modest contribution to the needs of developing countries. He recommended that governments ensure integration of water storage projects into water resource planning strategies, and questioned the interference of some developed country NGOs, as well as some findings of the World Commission on Dams (WCD) report.

Joji Corino, Tebtebba Foundation, spoke on the social challenges of developing dams, and the conflict between government priorities and indigenous peoples' rights. She highlighted inequity in the distribution of the costs and benefits of dams and emphasized the need for transparent and participatory decision-making processes. Asit Biswas, Third World Center for Water Management, said the appropriateness of dams depends on local conditions and cannot be generalized. He said the question is not "dams or no dams?" but how to improve their environmental, social and economic performance. Ger Bergkamp, IUCN, highlighted the importance of benefit sharing and public acceptance.

DAMS AND DEVELOPMENT: CHALLENGES TO FINANCING INSTITUTIONS: This session was organized by World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and chaired by Delmar Blasco, Ramsar Convention.

Ute Collier, WWF, underscored that the WCD guidelines present a way forward, particularly regarding: comprehensive needs and options assessments; public acceptance and benefit sharing; impact minimization; and existing dams. She challenged international lending agencies to, *inter alia*: update their investment guidelines in accordance with the WCD strategic priorities; screen out non-aligned projects in a transparent manner; and support national capacity building to plan and oversee project implementation.

Alessandro Palmieri, World Bank, said the Bank supports dams that are economically, socially and environmentally appropriate. He noted that the Bank is committed to the values and strategic priorities of the WCD, and stated that although the Bank will not use the WCD's guidelines as conditions for project approval, it will work with governments and developers to apply relevant guidelines. Michael Bristol, ADB, said many of the WCD guidelines conform with existing ADB policies. He noted that planning for large projects takes many years, and changes will therefore occur slowly over time. Jean-Pierre Sweerts, Rabobank Nederland, said Rabobank Nederland has never financed a dam or hydro project because of insufficient knowledge about the social and environmental risks.

Discussion: Participants discussed the value of small-scale projects and the need for capacity building for appraising dam projects in LDCs. One participant observed that the World Bank does not appear to incorporate the WCD values and strategic priorities into its work.

SENIOR OFFICIAL'S MEETING

Forum Bulletin coverage of the Senior Official's Meeting is based on information from the evening press briefing and in-the-corridor discussions with participating delegates.

The Senior Official's Meeting reconvened Thursday morning, to continue deliberations on the revised Co-Chairs' draft of the Ministerial Declaration. A second version was presented in the afternoon session. New proposals were tabled, including: ensuring that the cost-recovery principle should not prevent the poor from getting access to water and sanitation services; the identification and reflection of water priorities in national strategies for sustainable development; the valuation, and payment of environmental services; intensifying global efforts to protect inland fisheries and freshwater fish industries; and strengthening water-related issues within the Commission on Sustainable Development. Contentious issues included: the recognition of water as indispensable for human security; reference to the recommendations of the World Panel on Financing Water Infrastructure; the impacts of climate change on water resources; underscoring the impacts of a growing world population and its effects on freshwater resources; references to the outcomes of past World Water Forums, and applying the "user-pays" concept.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

ISSUES: In Kyoto, Water, Education and Capacity Building, and Financing Water Infrastructure will continue today, and conclude in the evening. In Shiga, IWRM and Basin Management, and Water for Peace will also conclude.

TOPICS: Dams and Sustainable Development will continue today.

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE: The Dialogue between Forum Participants and Ministers will be held this afternoon. The Senior Official's Meeting will continue discussing the draft Ministerial Declaration.

MAJOR GROUPS: The Children's World Water Forum will continue today in Shiga. In Kyoto, the Water Development Partners' Panel will be held.

SPECIAL PROGRAMMES: In Shiga, the Ministers' Meeting on Water, Food and Agriculture takes place today.

REGIONAL DAY: Today's Regional Day is Europe.

CEREMONIES: An award ceremony to present the "Water Voice" Messenger Prize will take place today in Kyoto.