

## MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE WATER CONVENTION

### HIGH-LEVEL SESSION ON THE WATER CONVENTION IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER GLOBAL COMMITMENTS

#### ISSUES AND RESPONSES BY THE HON. MINISTER FOR WATER RESOURCES WORKS AND HOUSING, GHANA

**1. How will the adoption of the SDGs, the Sendai Framework, the COP 21 Paris agreement and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda impact on your water policies, initiatives and programmes in particular transboundary water cooperation?**

*The commitments bring to light new dimensions that call for greater coordination, integrated policy making, and long-term perspective to cope with them. Specifically,*

- *The integrated and transformative nature of the 'new agenda' is a call for policy coherence. This requires convergence in policy actions between riparian states sharing basins with Ghana to achieve optimal economic and social impacts from the joint or complementary development of the common transboundary resources linked to water, energy and food security.*
- *The design of the national water policy will have to be extended also on cross-sectoral inter-linkages, the contribution of different actors, and finance mechanisms to sustain programs and initiatives at the national and transboundary levels.*
- *Review and develop a Sector Wide Approach to ensure the inclusion and emphasis of sustainability dimensions, critical inter-linkages, and transboundary impacts and risks in water and water related policies, initiatives and programmes.*
- *Place emphasis on strengthening foundational elements such as improved data, agreements, institutional structures and effective engagement of such structures with stakeholders and national, local levels that are instrumental to effective sustained cooperation in international waters.*

**2. Following the adoption of these commitments which obstacles do you see for their implementation?**

- *How to build common understanding on the new sustainable development agenda and the complexity of the challenges that the commitments aim to address. All actors at both national and transboundary levels should understand the nature of the new development agenda, the challenges that we all are confronting, and the need to address them in a coherent manner.*
- *How to achieve coherence and convergence between these key inter-related international commitments.*
- *The implementation of the new agenda will require that governments and key stakeholders at the local, national, regional and transboundary levels, acting individually and collectively, identify common challenges, set priorities, align policies and actions, and mobilize resources for implementation.*

- *The appropriate structures, institutions and initiatives could be key obstacles for implementation of these commitments. This also involves the issues of coordination with respect to their implementation to reduce unnecessary overlaps and costs.*
- *The issue of having in place an integrated framework for coordinated monitoring at all levels that can foster transboundary knowledge-sharing, reciprocal learning, and promote shared accountability for transboundary challenges and opportunities.*

**3. What do you suggest to overcome them and achieve the needed paradigm change, in terms of transboundary water cooperation?**

- *First, is to conceptualize the complexity of the situation and identify institutions and stakeholders that are significant for a successful implementation of the commitments.*
- *Second, to assess which actions could be most effectively implemented at different governance levels, supported by coordinated actions of different institutional levels and stakeholder groups, and how they affect synergies between different but related commitments*
- *Third, is to investigate if the effectiveness of the modes of governance could be improved through the creation of coordinating institutional structures at the national and transboundary level and policy. There is the need however, to build on existing policy co-ordination structures and inter- governmental and regional mechanisms.*

**4. How can the Water Convention, its institutional structure and its activities best support the implementation of these new commitments?**

- *Guide the assessment and analysis of benefits of transboundary water cooperation with the view to encourage the starting up cooperation and for developing stronger cooperation; and help to attract financial resources to implement the transboundary water cooperation solutions with respect to the commitments.*
- *Following from (1) above, support the initiation and conclusion of protocols and agreements (eventually resulting in establishment of formal River Basin Organisations where appropriate).*
- *Establishing standardised methods and procedures for data collection, processing and dissemination, both at national and regional levels, for use by all riparian countries; and encouraging the coordination and exchange of standardised data and information, and their use with respect to transboundary issues.*
- *Establishing the mechanisms for sharing the benefits of shared water resources, for example, by extending hydropower, potable water, and water transport to other co-riparian countries, where feasible.*
- *Establish a compendium of innovative financing approaches in support of SDG implementation at country and regional levels.*