

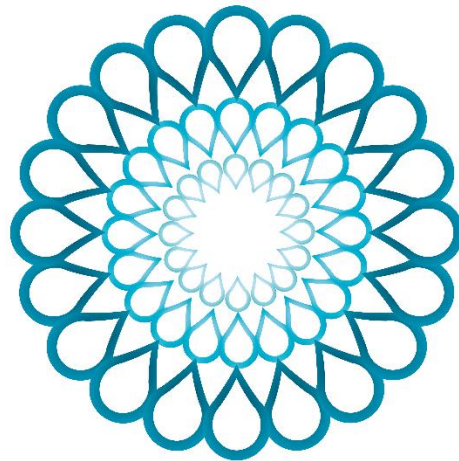


WORKING DOCUMENT

For the First Meeting of OIC Water Council

Istanbul

15-16 November, 2017



I. BACKGROUND

1. The First Islamic Conference of Ministers responsible for Water (ICMW) was held in March 2009 in Turkey and recommended developing the OIC Water Vision as a strategy framework for joint actions to overcome the water related issues. Following this decision, the 2nd ICMW was held in Turkey in March 2012 and the OIC Water Vision document has been adopted which is outlining a framework for cooperation in the field of water.
2. Pursuant to the decision of the 2nd ICMW, 44 Member States have designated National Focal Points (NFP) for close collaboration on water issues. The First Meeting of NFP for OIC Water Vision was held in Istanbul in June 2015. The meeting inter alia, discussed the national strategies and plans on water use in Member States and provided a platform for better communication among focal points as the representatives of Member States in the field of water.
3. The 3rd ICMW which was held in Istanbul between the dates 17-19 May 2016, approved the establishment of the OIC Water Council and adopted its Terms of Reference. The Water Council comprises the member states representing three regions of the OIC as Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Egypt, Guinea, Iraq, Iran, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda and OIC General Secretariat, relevant OIC institutions and international organizations as observers.
4. The mission of the Water Council is to promote activities recommended by the OIC Water Vision, facilitate capacity building and exchange of experience through collaboration among OIC stakeholders, elaborate on a potential financial mechanism and demonstrate success for future consideration of greater cooperation among the OIC Member States.
5. The First OIC Summit on Science & Technology held in Astana on 10-11 September 2017 accords high priority to strengthen the capabilities of the Member States for the optimal use of water resources. The summit also adopted the OIC Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Agenda 2026 that set the following targets for the Member States:
 - i. Increase efficiency in water use and combat desertification through the use of new technologies and farming methodologies;
 - ii. Aim for maximum recycling of urban wastewater;
 - iii. Prepare national water budgets at the 'local' levels where possible, supplemented by monitoring of sub-aquifers, glaciers, and loss in canals.
6. It is pertinent to mention that OIC Member States have also agreed to implement the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted in September 2015. UN Sustainable Development Goal 6 sets specific targets to be achieved by 2030 in the water sector.

II. PROPOSED AGENDA FOR ACTION

7. Water related issues have always been a concern for the OIC countries. There is a need for sustainable use of water resources through strengthening the institutional capacity of Member States. It will help to effectively implement the Water Vision by taking into consideration of adaptation to the climate change, use water efficiently, increase water quality and have adequate clean water and sanitation to all, through development of required infrastructures.

8. In order to help the Member States in tackling with water-related issues, the OIC Water Vision calls for increased intra-OIC cooperation in sharing information, encouraging innovation, networking institutions, and increasing investment and capacity for the development and management of related infrastructure.

9. The Water Council may formulate an implementation plan of activities with the following broad objectives:

- Assessment of the needs of water infrastructure and capacities of the Member States to facilitate better collaboration.
- Identification of lead water institutes in Member States. A network of champion institutions may be established for sharing of ideas, experiences and best practices among the Member States.
- Collaborative activities on capacity building, innovative technological ideas and developing training programs among research and training institutes of the Member States to identify urgent water issues and best technological solutions to resolve these issues.
- Capacity building activities on solving water related problems, and water resources management practices as well as management of the water facilities and infrastructure.
- Resource mobilization mechanisms for the implementation of water projects on sanitation, adaptation to adverse impacts of climate change on water resources, water related disasters such as droughts, floods and diseases, as well as developing water infrastructure, particularly in Least Developed OIC counties.

a) Assessment of the Needs and Capacities of Member States

10. It is important to develop a comprehensive understanding of water-related challenges and their impacts, both at the national and local scales, faced by Member States. The OIC STI Agenda 2026 also calls upon the Member States to prepare national water budgets at the 'local' levels where possible. The information regarding water budgets will be used to identify and develop water-related tailor made recommendations. Thus, regular and long term data is to be achieved and used to demonstrate water potential in the Member States.

11. Some Member States lack the capabilities to fulfill a comprehensive exercise as such. It is therefore important to provide assistance by developed Member States of the OIC to these Member States by networking of their research institutions, carrying out joint collaborative research and capacity building activities to the benefit of relevant governmental institutions.

b) Networking of Water Centres of Excellence

12. There are many centres of excellence with experience in water-related issues within the ministries, research and training institutions, private sector and civil societies of the OIC countries. However, in many cases their findings are not shared or promoted among the Member States.

13. The OIC Water Council may support a dedicated network of centres of excellence in the Islamic world to share knowledge and experience with other related institutions. It would contribute to pooling efforts and initiatives by monitoring technological developments and providing knowledge to the other institutions in the water sector.

14. Pursuant to the decision of 2nd ICMW, the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) has established a web portal on water resources to facilitate matching the needs of Member States with offers in terms of training, capacity building, exchange of experience, expertise and technical assistance. However, there is a need to reactivate the web portal in light of the recommendations of the OIC Water Council.

15. The web portal will assist the center of excellences to share their research and best practices in a common platform. Members of the OIC Water Council as well as other OIC Member States may actively interact with SESRIC by designating lead institutions and focal points of these institutions. The Water Council may mandate SESRIC to liaise with the centers of excellences related to water issues in the Member States. At the same time, observer institutes determined by the Water Council may provide technical assistance to SESRIC.

c) Collaborative Research Activities & Capacity Building Activities

16. There is a need to synchronize the work on water issues carried out by the organizations within OIC in order to avoid the duplication. Collaborative research and development could be catalyzed and commissioned between centres of excellence in key water-related areas (e.g. sustainable use of water, desalination, wastewater reclamation and reuse, efficient use of water, improvement of sanitation, prevention of waterborne diseases in most suffering countries, disaster and risk management against extreme conditions as droughts, scarcity and floods, innovative future scenario development including climate change and migration etc.).

17. There is great diversity in water management institutions established within the OIC countries, with some being based on central or local government departments, whilst others include private sector, and civil society groups. It is important to strengthen the capacities of these different stakeholders (e.g. policy developers, planners, regulators, water managers, service providers, contractors, water users and NGO) within the OIC Member States.

18. There are various ways of developing capacity and many different areas of skill development. In order to assess the capacity gaps of Member States, SESRIC together with Turkish Water Institute (SUEN) has prepared a questionnaire which was shared with Member States. SESRIC has also developed the Water Resources Management Capacity Building Programme (Water-CaB) with the aim of enhancing capacities of human resources in Member States. As a result of this study, water supply and distribution, water and wastewater treatment,

irrigation efficiency, desalination, water demand management, reuse of water and wastewater, hydrometric monitoring, flood and drought management, finance, technology transfer and particularly capacity building areas were identified requiring special attention.

19. It is important to multiply the training programs by engaging designated Centres of Excellence, Member States and OIC institutions. By this, institutional capacity can be strengthened on specific water disciplines (e.g. in water policy, law, engineering, economics, data and information, etc.) as well as to develop technical capacities in all water-related fields such as hydrology, water and wastewater management, water reuse, water quality monitoring, water efficiency and modelling.

d) Resource Mobilization

20. Many OIC Member States lack the necessary financial means to build or upgrade the necessary infrastructure related to water services as supply, sanitation and treatment etc. and water management. There is a need to increase both public and private investments within and among OIC countries, towards solving water related problems particularly in the Least Development Member States of the OIC. In order to help the Member States, a resource mobilization (sub)-group needs to be set up comprising the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), donor organizations and development agencies of the OIC Member States. The Resource Mobilization Group under the OIC Water Council will discuss the financing mechanisms of various water and sanitation projects approved by the OIC Water Council which the Member States would like to implement particularly in suffering countries.

III. PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISM

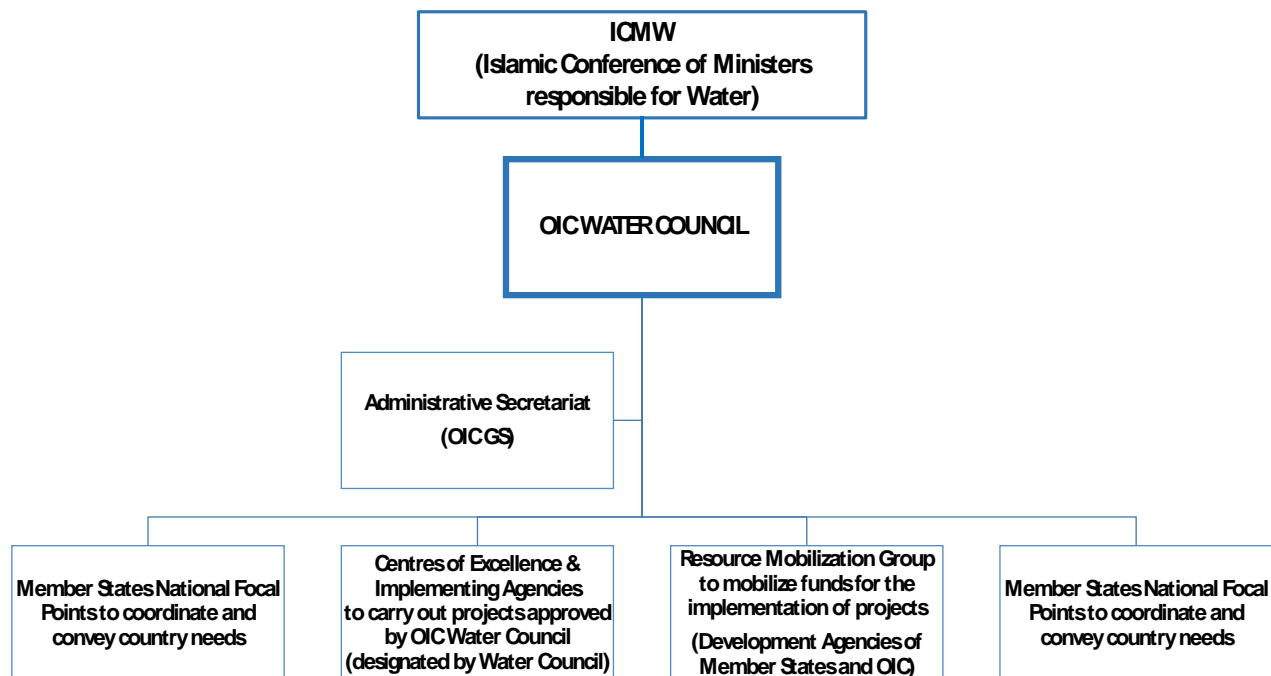


Figure 1. The OIC Water Council and Resource Mobilization Group¹

IV. PROPOSED ACTIVITIES OF OIC WATER COUNCIL

No.	Proposed Activities	Timelines
1.	Assess institutional and human capacity requirements in Member States	2017-2023
2.	Implement collaborative activities amongst water institutes of OIC countries to increase research, capacity building and information in the water sector	2017-2023
3.	Designate Centres of Excellence and Implementing Agencies ready to execute projects to be approved by OIC Water Council	2017-2018
4.	Propose members of the Resource Mobilization Group to the 4th ICMW	2017-2018
5.	Promote network of Centres of Excellence in collaborative arrangements with the Member States	2017-2023
6.	Reactivate an online portal to facilitate exchange of experiences, transfer of technologies and identification of good practices.	2017-2018
7.	Carry out capacity building and training workshops for government officials, civil society, private sector, academic and research institutions of Member States	2017-2023

¹ All bodies in this scheme will report to the OIC Water Council, and the OIC Water Council to the ICMW

8.	Hold expert meetings and training workshops on selected areas that is decided by the ICMW on the basis of Water Vision	2017-2023
9.	Regularize periodic meetings to discuss resource mobilization for solving water related problems and development of required water infrastructure in Member States	2017-2023