

MARRAKECH DECLARATION

1997 Saturday, March 22

We, the participants of the First World Water Forum, held on the occasion of World Water Day in Marrakesh on March 21-22 1997, acknowledge the generous support of His Majesty King Hassan II for his visionary patronage of this historic meeting. Motivated by his leadership and dedication to water issues, we are further inspired by the ideas contained in his far-seeing Message to this First World Water Forum.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco for organizing this Forum, and thank its people and this great city of Marrakesh for their extraordinary hospitality.

We recognize and note the urgent need for a better understanding of all the complex issues- quantitative and qualitative, political and economic legal and institutional, social and financial, educational and environmental- that must go into shaping a water policy for the next millennium.

The Forum calls on governments, international organizations, NGO's and the peoples of the World to work together in a renewed partnership to put into practice the Mar del Plata and Dublin Principles and Chapter 18 of the Rio Summit to initiate a « Blue Revolution» to ensure sustainability of the Earth's water resources.

In particular the Forum recommends action to recognize the basic human needs to have access to clean water and sanitation, to establish an effective mechanism for management of shared waters, to support and preserve ecosystems, to encourage the efficient use of water, to address gender equity issues in water use and to encourage partnership between the members of Civil Society and Governments.

In response to demonstrated needs and recommended actions, we hereby mandate the World Water Council to launch a 3-year initiative of study, consultation and analysis that will lead to a global Vision for Water, Life and the Environment in the next century. Building on past international efforts and relying on the collective wisdom and resources of the international water community, the process leading to a Vision will include research, consultations, workshops, print and electronic publications and many other means for absorbing, synthesizing and disseminating knowledge. At the conclusion of this process, fully aware of the complexities and pitfalls along the way, the Vision will offer a policy-relevant conclusions and recommendations for action to be taken by the world's leaders to meet the needs of future generations.

Resolution

1. We the participants in the First World Water Forum, held in Marrakesh on March 21 and 22 1997, take note of and approve the Declaration of Marrakesh issued this World Water Day of 1997. We hereby urge our respective governments and organizations to adopt the language and the principles of the Declaration of Marrakesh as official policy.
2. We also hereby request the Government of Morocco to table the Declaration of Marrakesh on the occasion of the United Nations General Assembly to be held in June 1997.