Towards urban water security under scarcity

*World Water Week 2017*

Stockholm, Sweden
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Urban Water Security under Scarcity

A new pathway to urban water security

Unprecedented Challenges
Population growth, urbanization, economic and climate change are looming over urban water security in the region.

Unsustainable Resource Management
Putting the region on a dangerous path towards major water crises in many countries.

Unconcerned Utilities
Cities worldwide continue to rely on traditional solutions based on abundant resources and engineering approaches to increasing water supplies.

Shifting the mindset towards resilience through diversification
The mindset must shift away from linear solutions, to embrace more integrated approaches. To support this, there is tremendous scope to demystify some of the existing, practical solutions to get there, and unleash the region’s potential to tackle physical scarcity.
Unprecedented challenges are looming over urban water security in the region…

Most of MENA population (> 60%) live in areas of high / very high water stress, – a situation shared by much of the Mediterranean region.

In MENA region, urban population to increase by 120% by 2050, while all climate models point to more severe and intense droughts in the future.

In 2050, per capita municipal consumption could be constrained to 70-85% its current level, due to decline of water availability and competition with other users (mostly agriculture).

...and the current management of water resources is putting the region on a dangerous path.

GW stress has increased almost everywhere from 1990-2010.
Resilience through diversification

It’s not either/or anymore, it’s both/and, where increased uncertainty and variability call for a better risk balance.

Cooperating for increased allocations

Working with non-municipal users to promote wastewater reuse, or water banking/trading.

New questions become critical for service providers…

- Are the water resources we rely on managed in a sustainable manner?
- Which other users rely on these water resources?
- Will their (and our) water demand increase? What will that mean for our supplies?
- How will water resources be affected by climate change?
- Are there other, untapped water resources available?

… some of which have already embraced a new mindset.

Closing the urban water cycle

Promoting recycling and recharge, and increase unlimited resources such as desalination.
Many solutions have already proved effective

Many cities have already pioneered effective solutions to build resilience to water scarcity and there is tremendous scope to demystify their experience.

**Optimize Conventional Resources**
Better storage management (surface and groundwater), inter-basin transfers

**Increase Non-Conventional Resources**
Seawater or brackish water desalination, wastewater recycling, stormwater harvesting

**Improve Demand Management**
Leakage reduction, Conservation

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Successful experiences need to be scaled up...

- **Technologies are known**, and often less costly than alternative, especially when accounting for scarcity
- **Integration is critical**, to overcome the array of political, cultural, and other barriers
- **Public Outreach is key** to most successful experiences (e.g. Pure Water in San Diego)

... to bring the most successful solutions to the forefront
How do we unleash the region’s potential?

**Political/cultural issues**
Limited sensitivity to water risks, entrenched engineering approaches, complexity of cooperation and demand management, cultural resistance to recycling, desalination

**Institutional issues**
Lack of accountability/autonomy of service providers, lack of mechanisms for integrated planning, rigid regulatory frameworks limiting innovations (recycling, trading, PPPs)

**Technical/economic issues**
Limited awareness of solutions, insufficient capacity for design/O&M, lack of robust economic assessment tools, limited financial resources
The Water Scarce Cities Initiative

Bolster awareness of effective approaches to build urban water security and climate resilience across the MENA region

**Case Studies**
Generate knowledge
Build on the review of water scarce cities experiences around the world to demystify options for urban water security under scarcity

**Network**
Facilitate exchanges
multi-stakeholder dialogue, knowledge flow and collaboration through establishing a global network of practitioners and experts

**Support**
Engage our clients
Facilitate technical assistance to interested cities, to establish feasible pathways to water security

The case studies will describe the nature of the local challenge from a water resources perspective, the technical solutions, costs and institutional mechanisms put in place. They will analyze the political economy around their adoption, identify the drivers of change and analyze how governance, capacity or technological challenges were addressed.

This would include state/local government, water agency and utility managers with firsthand experience dealing with water scarcity or interest in exploring new approaches, and academic think-hubs that are fostering knowledge flows, in order to bring that experience to our countries, cities and utilities most in need.

This support could include assessing current water resources management approaches, identifying opportunities based on knowledge generated through the initiative, or incentivizing the application of innovative approaches.
The Water Scarce Cities Initiative

Network – potential partnerships and upcoming events

- 2014 AZ/NV study tour
- 2016 CA study tour
- Spring 2018 Southwest USA Conference + study tour
- Dec 2016 CMI WSC-Desal workshop
- May 2017 Morocco Fall 2017 Malta WSC Conferences and study tours
- May 2017 Mediterranean CMI, AFD, GIZ, FAO, GWP Med, ACWA, MENA NWC, Malta WSC
- Aug 2017 WSC session @World Water Week
- March 2017 WB Water Week

Southwest USA
- UC Berkeley, Stanford, UCLA, ASU...
- Utilities in San Diego, Orange County, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Tucson...

Mediterranean
- CMI, AFD, GIZ, FAO, GWP Med, ACWA, MENA NWC, Malta WSC

Asia and Pacific
- Australian Water Partnership, Water Sensitive Cities
- Singapore PUB

Global
- 100RC, ICLEI, IWA, WWC, SIWI

Africa
- Namibia Water Corporation

And the 5+5

Africa
- Namibia Water Corporation
The Water Scarce Cities Initiative

Knowledge – on-going/potential case studies and target cities

WSC Advanced
WSC Examples
WSC Potential

Los Angeles / OC
San Diego

Tucson
Las Vegas

Mexico City

Barcelona

Murcia

Marrakesh

Algiers
Malta

Libya

Gaza
Jerusalem

Doha
Muscat

Sanaa

Djibouti

Mombasa

Windhoek

Singapore

Perth

Melbourne

Fortaleza

Lima

Arequipa

Salta
Example from Southern California

Orange County Water District’s decades of experience mobilizing non-conventional resources to secure local groundwater resources

Groundwater Governance

Orange County Water District (OCWD) developed wastewater recycling and stormwater capture to recharge the aquifer and reduce its dependence to imported water

Wastewater Recycling

OCWD built a 400,000 CM/day water purification facility (GWRS), operational since 2008, producing near distilled quality to recharge the aquifer

Stormwater Capture

OCWD also built a dam on the only existing (seasonal) river in its jurisdiction, and manages the river bed into recharge basins, controlled by inflatable rubber dams
Example from Namibia

Windhoek’s decades of experience addressing extreme water scarcity

Groundwater Management

Windhoek artificially recharges its local aquifer, where surface water is “banked” during wet years as security against droughts.

Water Reclamation

Wastewater reuse

The treatment of its wastewater effluents covers 17% of Windhoek’s potable water demand. It is also used for urban irrigation and gardening needs (golf, parks, etc.)

Water conservation

With non-revenue water at 13% and well targeted regulation and tariff structure to address water wastage, Windhoek strives to make every drop count.
Example from Malta

Malta’s New Water strategy to diversify water resources and reduce pressure on aquifers

Seawater desalination
First introduced in Malta in the early 1880’s through distillation plants, seawater desalination has long been a pillar of the country’s water supply.

Rainwater harvesting
Increase in rainwater harvesting infrastructure capacity at national scale, with a focus on the generation of additional benefits (ecosystems, tourism…)

Wastewater reuse
Three new polishing plants for re-use in irrigation, landscaping, industry and aquifer recharge

Water conservation
Reduction by 40% of water demand since 1994 through leakages reduction, awareness campaigns and economic incentives

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Thank you for your attention

And if you’re interested...

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And Our partners
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Australian Water Partnership
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