



Knowledge Networking for Water Security in the 21st Century

Recommendation for Endorsement to Establish a Steering Group on Water and Climate Change

For the Asia-Pacific Water Forum's 5th Governing Council Meeting, Singapore, 26 June 2009

INTRODUCTION

1 With the endorsement of the Governing Council of the Asia-Pacific Water Forum (APWF), the APWF *KnowledgeHubs* initiative was launched in June 2008 during the Singapore International Water Week. The website is at www.apwf-knowledgehubs.net. Recent progress of the initiative is reported separately to the Governing Council by PUB Singapore as the co-lead organization for APWF's Key Result Area 1 for *Developing Knowledge and Lessons*.

2 Since December 2008, the *KnowledgeHubs* initiative has convened three meetings to consult with clients, partners, and experts on the need to improve climate change projections, impact assessments and adaptation strategies and their adaptation at national and local levels in countries throughout the region.¹ Through these meetings, a consensus has emerged on priority activities in these three areas to be supported by APWF's *KnowledgeHubs* initiative. The APWF's regional knowledge hub for water and climate change adaptation (the National Hydraulic Research Institute of Malaysia – NAHRIM) has played a key role in convening these meetings and working as focal point to bring the participants together, coordinate the development of the action plan, and organize the hub's support services.

3 NAHRIM and its partners and clients recognize that the impacts of climate change are already felt in countries across the Asia-Pacific region, and they are expected to increase in the years and decades to come. Changes in water resources, from melting glaciers to increased floods, droughts, and sea level rise, amongst others, will impact significantly on socio-economic development and the environment in unprecedented ways. In response, numerous initiatives, programs and projects are being established in the region to promote climate change mitigation and adaptation, including for water management, which has been flagged as a priority by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

4 APWF has started to support water and climate change adaptation through its *KnowledgeHubs* initiative launched in 2008. APWF will also promote investments and good practices in climate change adaptation through its *Ministers for Water Security* initiative announced at the 5th World Water Forum in Istanbul in 2009. To advocate good practices and synergize the knowledge sharing and capacity development in the region, NAHRIM and its partners have recognized the need for APWF to form a Steering Group comprising experts,

¹ The meetings were held in Malaysia (Bangi and Putrajaya) and at the Asian Development Bank's headquarters in Manila, Philippines,

leaders, and funding agencies. The *APWF Steering Group on Water and Climate Change* (the Group) is expected to advise leaders on policies and investments, and to guide the work of the knowledge hubs with their partners and clients on improving climate change projections, impact assessments, and adaptation strategies. The Group is expected to make a significant contribution in the 3 key result areas, for which tasks have been outlined in Terms of Reference, which has been posted on APWF's website (see Annex 1):

- (i) *Advising Leaders*: to advise and support leaders in the Asia Pacific region on policies and good practices for mitigation and adaptation of the impacts of climate change on water resources management and water services;
- (ii) *Guiding Knowledge Networking*: to guide the APWF knowledge hubs in their work on water and climate change with their partners and clients, and thereby increase synergies for advocacy, knowledge sharing, capacity development, and funding of initiatives;
- (iii) *Reporting Progress*: to report annually to the leaders in the Asia-Pacific region and the members of the APWF network on the region's progress in addressing the impacts, with recommendations for action.

5 The Terms of Reference also outlines the composition of the Group and organizational arrangements for meetings, governance, secretariat, and work plan. Candidate members have been approached and have responded positively, and the proposed membership of the Group is shown in Annex 2. It is expected that members of the Group will contribute their time and advice on a voluntary basis, while APWF partners will work to mobilize funding for participation in the Group's meetings as needed.

RECOMMENDATION

6 Considering that the three regional meetings organized by the *APWF KnowledgeHubs* with partners and clients have been instrumental in developing a consensus on planned actions for better climate change projections, impact assessments and adaptation activities; and noting that the need was recognized for a regional steering group to be established to advise leaders, guide knowledge networking, and reporting progress; **it is recommended that the APWF Governing Council (i) endorse the establishment of the *APWF Steering Group on Water and Climate Change*, together with its Terms of Reference and composition of the Group, (ii) review the Group's work and outputs from time to time, and (iii) acknowledge the leadership and commitment by the Government of Malaysia to support NAHRIM in its functions of regional knowledge hub for water and climate change adaptation and Secretariat of the Group.**

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