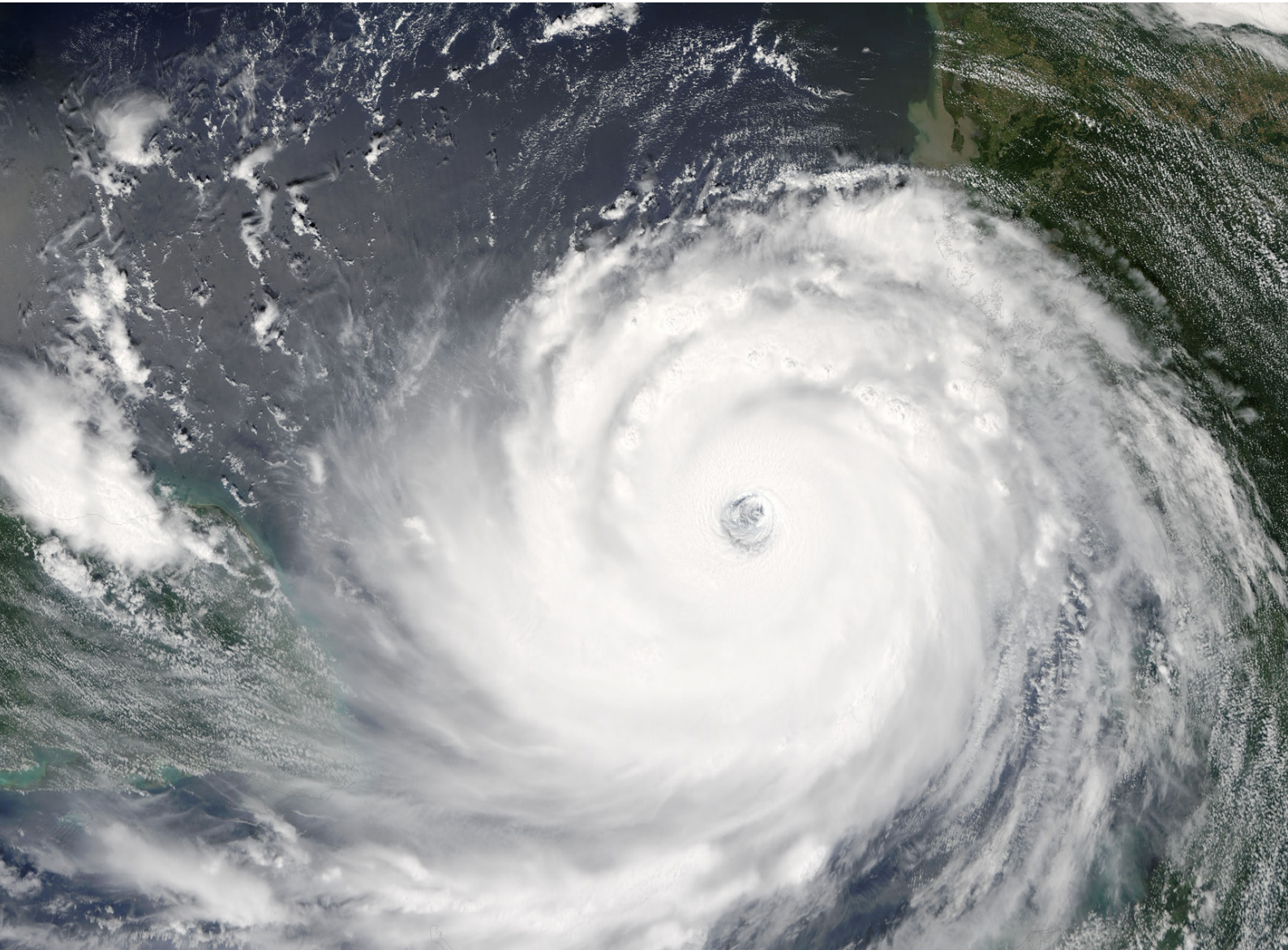


CLIMATE CHALLENGES

SUMMARY

WATER CAUCUS, MARSEILLE, FRANCE, 14 OCTOBER 2009



Keynote and Panel:

- Pavel Kabat, WUR Netherlands
- Simon Anderson, IIED
- Bill Cosgrove, World Water Assessment Programme
- Richard Harpin, Halcrow
- Lifeng Li, WWF
- Eva Rathgeber, Gender and Water Alliance
- Henk van Schaik, CPWC – Moderator
- Martin Visbeck, Leibniz-Institut für Meereswissenschaften

This workshop debated the notion of adaptive management from different perspectives. The assembled group comprised water leaders from a diverse set of backgrounds working in areas ranging from government to the private sector, science to advocacy, and spanning a range of disciplines from engineering to the natural and social sciences.

A keynote presentation from Pavel Kabat focused on the issue of how the water community could benefit from climate information and cope with its uncertainty.

Recognizing that the root of most uncertainty in climate projection lies in future economic and demographic development and how this is translated into greenhouse gas emissions and changes in the environment, Dr Kabat suggested that the most adequate response would be so-called “adaptive management”.

From the top-down this combines developed, flexible and adaptive response options decided upon through an interactive bottom-up multistakeholder process. Elements of this process should include decision-making on risk acceptance and option selection precautions, including on de-investments and allowance for continuous adjustment to changing conditions.

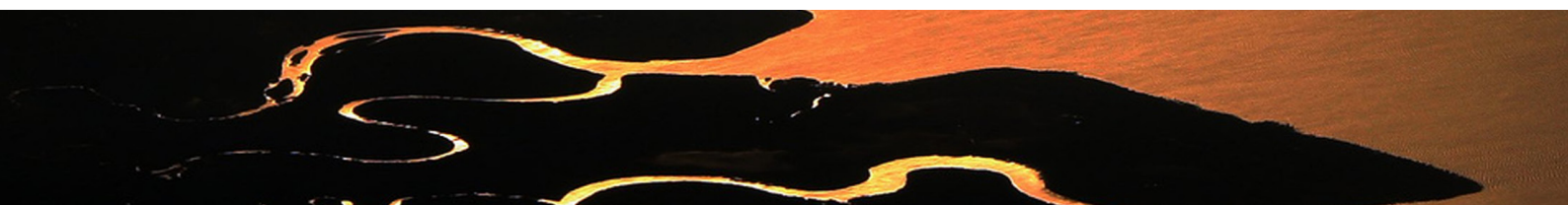


Dr Kabat’s major proposal was supported by Richard Harpin (Halcrow Group) who offered insights into current practice in the engineering business.

Lifeng Li (World Wildlife Fund) remarked on the importance of managing water as part of wider ecosystem management and that ecosystem services should provide greater impetus to conserve these natural systems.

Simon Anderson (International Institute for Environment and Development) added his perspective on current adaptation policy and practice and pointed out significant potential opportunities had been missed, in particular with regard to empowering less developed nations in accessing and processing information available.

Eva Rathgeber (Gender and Water Alliance) reminded the participants that most management solutions are not gender neutral and that the specific roles of men and women in the social fabric of societies need to be taken into account.





Bill Cosgrove (World Water Assessment Programme) added that developing and implementing adaptive management solutions requires at its base, global access to the best information. This immediately challenges our current situation with declining in-situ observation systems and a growing hesitancy to share primary data with the community at large in an open and unrestricted manner.

Information about the future will always be uncertain and probabilistic in nature. The most likely outcome should be expected to change as one gets closer to the date of concern. Thus adaptive management should be developed in the context of a “no regret” strategy, enabling the flexibility to readjust without large de-investment costs and the potential to step up measures when needed.

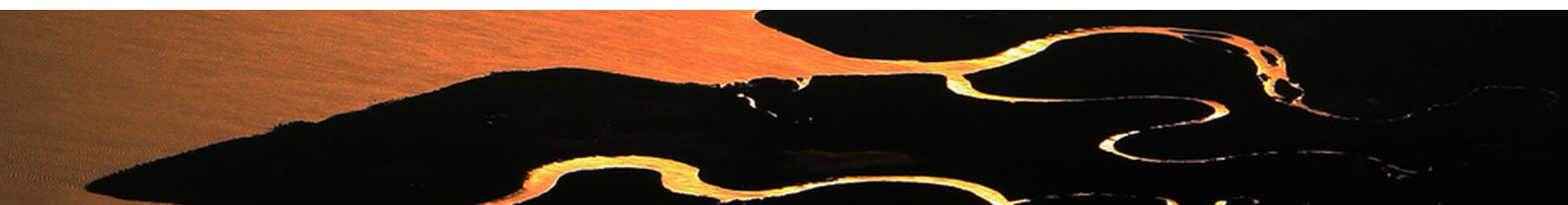
Reactions from participants stressed that the governance issues of implementing the next generation of water management taking into account climate variability and change are significant. In addition, Martin Visbeck (Programme Chair of the World Climate Conference) pointed out that the framework for climate risk management for the water sector requires new levels of institutional arrangement. .

The Global Framework for Climate Services, prepared at the World Climate Conference 3 in September 2009, provides a significant opportunity.

Financial and gender aspects also need to be taken into account. In particular, the recognized responsibility of the developed world to facilitate enduring capacity building in the developing world that would enable development of efficient local solutions.



Martin Visbeck, Session Rapporteur



NEXT STEPS

The Global Framework for Climate Services will depend on strong partnership between the sectors in order to share a wide range of important information that will serve as the basis for a substantially new, timely and efficient climate service tailored to the needs of the global water community. The ensuing improved climate risk management in the water sector will increase climate resilience and hence is a tangible first step towards larger climate adaptation issues.

Participants considered it useful to continue the debate on the basis of concrete examples, in addition to furthering the dialogue on the features and concept of adaptive management.

Participants considered it useful to continue the debate on the basis of concrete examples, in addition to furthering the dialogue on the features and concept of adaptive management.

The complexity of water issues transcends many disciplines, nations and societal dimensions. As such, the World Water Council has a role in “opening the water box” to those who can provide valuable information, who can provide the much needed financial resources, and who will benefit from improved global management of scarce water resources. With broad and diverse participation by all stakeholders and constituencies, the WWC is poised to take a leadership role on water and climate issues.



WORLD WATER COUNCIL - CONSEIL MONDIAL DE L'EAU - CONSEJO MUNDIAL DEL AGUA
Espace Gaymard - 2-4 Place d'Arvieux - 13002 Marseille - FRANCE
Tel: 00 33 (0)4 91 99 41 00 - Fax: 00 33 (0)4 91 99 41 41
www.worldwatercouncil.org