



## **King Hassan II Great World Water Prize awarded to OECD at the 8<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum**

- *OECD awarded winner of the prestigious prize for their contribution to making water a global priority*
- *Winner announced at the opening ceremony of the 8<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum in Brasilia, which brings together stakeholders from all levels of the global water community from around the world.*
- *Presentation of this award highlights efforts of the Government of Morocco and the World Water Council towards ensuring water security and access for the most vulnerable groups.*

*World Water Council, Brasilia, 20 March 2018* – The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) was awarded the 6<sup>th</sup> King Hassan II Great World Water Prize by the Government of Morocco and the World Water Council at the 8<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum in Brasilia, Brazil. This award, one of the highest distinctions in the water sector, recognizes excellence in “cooperation and sound management in the development and use of water resources”, with OECD receiving \$100 000 USD alongside the prize.

During the opening ceremony of the 8th World Water Forum, currently underway in the Brazilian capital, Brasilia, Angel Gurría, the Secretary-General of the winning organization, described receiving this prize as a great honor. He went on to highlight the damning water issues the world continues to face, “More than 2 billion people globally live in countries with excess water stress, while there are challenges that don’t even make the headlines and are devastating. One example is the millions of girls who are prevented from going to school, simply because there is no toilet. We need to make these shocking statistics a thing of the past.”

The OECD, based in Paris, France, has been recognized for its work in elevating water security as a crucial issue, ensuring greater visibility globally for a wide range of associated issues and providing policy guidance on water security to OECD members and non-OECD countries.

Now in its 6<sup>th</sup> edition, the King Hassan II Great World Water Prize is a world-renowned and prestigious policy tool, jointly established by the Kingdom of Morocco and the World Water Council, paying tribute to His Majesty the late King Hassan II. The prize is awarded every three years at the World Water Forum by an international jury. The jury for this year’s edition was led by Charafat Afailal El Yedri, Secretary of State for the Moroccan Ministry of Equipment, Transport, Logistics and Water. The prize operates under the overarching theme of “cooperation and solidarity in the fields of management and development of water resources.” This 6<sup>th</sup> edition focuses on rewarding candidates specifically for working towards “greater solidarity and inclusion in order to ensure water security and climate justice.”

The awarding of the 6<sup>th</sup> Edition of the King Hassan II Grand Prize is one of a number of important activities and presentations currently taking place at the 8<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum. Founded by the World Water Council, the World Water Forum represents an international meeting point to discuss water-related problems and find solutions for the world's most pressing water issues. The World Water Forum is being held from the 18<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2018, under the over-arching theme of "Sharing Water," in light of water's role in uniting communities and tearing down barriers. The World Water Council welcomes all to join the world's biggest water-related event, bringing together heads of state, ministers, high-level decision makers, water experts and professionals, local authorities, civil society, and academics. The World Water Forum places water firmly at the heart of global development and calls citizens to act to ensure a sustainable future.

*On Wednesday 21 March, the Hassan Prize and its winner OECD, will be celebrated by a cocktail event at 12:30 at the Moroccan Pavilion (stand E03 located in the Expo Hall), and will be followed by a press briefing.*

***About the World Water Council:***

The World Water Council (WWC) is an international multi-stakeholder platform organization, the founder and co-organizer of the World Water Forum. The World Water Council's mission is to mobilize action on critical water issues at all levels, including the highest decision-making level, by engaging people in debate and challenging conventional thinking. The Council focuses on the political dimensions of water security, adaptation, and sustainability, and works to position water at the top of the global political agenda. Headquartered in Marseille, France, and created in 1996, the World Water Council brings together over 300 member organizations from more than 50 different countries. More on [www.worldwatercouncil.org](http://www.worldwatercouncil.org) @wwatercouncil #wwatercouncil

***About the Kingdom of Morocco:***

Protecting water resources was a National Priority for the Kingdom of Morocco long before Millennium Development and Sustainable Development Goals. Among many other projects, the country elaborated its policy for dams and reservoirs aiming to secure the country's water supply and contribute to its food security, and economic and social development.

Today, under the leadership of His Majesty King Mohamed VI, the Kingdom of Morocco is developing integrated water resources management policies and implementing innovative and alternative technologies. Morocco is about to overcome its challenges due to water scarcity, increase of the water demand, and the protection of the environment.

As a key player in customizing solutions and thought leadership, Morocco has developed North-South and more recently South-South cooperation efforts, offering its expertise and experience to close partners in water resources mobilization, water efficiency (drip irrigation system) and the development of alternative technologies (sea-water desalination, treated wastewater reuse).

Building on its political achievements and international outreach, Morocco had the privilege of hosting the very first World Water Forum in 1997 in Marrakech. Since then, Morocco has participated in all following editions of the World Water Forum.

**For more information:**

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