



RESEARCH  
PROGRAM ON  
Water, Land and  
Ecosystems



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## PRESS RELEASE

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### Uncovering and Confronting Global Groundwater Challenges

*Groundwater is running out. Global partnerships are key to securing groundwater resources for future generations. A new initiative seeks to unite organizations to promote sustainable groundwater management*

STOCKHOLM (30 AUGUST 2016) — Around the world, wells pump about [1,000 cubic kilometres of water](#) each year to supply irrigated agriculture, livestock, and other human needs. This is more than one third of all the water withdrawn for human use. The realities of depletion are threatening livelihoods and food production as more and more water is used and [specific policies](#) fail to equally engage users and the state. How to resolve the growing needs of industrializing economies without severely threatening groundwater supplies?

The answer will hopefully come from the Groundwater Solutions Initiative for Policy and Practice ([GRIPP](#)), launched today at [Stockholm World Water Week](#). Only by creating long-term partnerships to fill knowledge gaps, share transferable solutions, and influence decision makers will the goal of sustainable groundwater management be achieved and successes properly scaled to the global level.

“Groundwater is a hidden resource that everybody relies on, especially during droughts, but little has been done in the way of managing it. In one generation, this resource has been severely depleted and degraded. This could have huge implications particularly in terms of climate change vulnerability, ecosystem breakdown, water insecurity and food insecurity.” says Dr. Karen Villholth, GRIPP Coordinator and Sub-Theme Leader and Principal Researcher for Groundwater and Underground Solutions at the International Water Management Institute. “The partners in the GRIPP initiative have come together to improve the knowledge base on groundwater and promote improved management of groundwater resources.”



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GRIPP consists of over 15 international partners who strive to achieve groundwater sustainability through four key pillars. Firstly, it creates strong networks between interdisciplinary research and development-gearred institutions, as well as long-term partnerships with governments and local stakeholders. Secondly, it promotes testing and applying concrete solutions based on a combination of supply and demand side management, top-down and bottom-up approaches, and capacity development. Thirdly, GRIPP encourages sharing experiences and out-scaling viable solutions. Finally, it fills knowledge gaps through applied integrated research, and dissemination through easily accessible knowledge products and channels.

“With GRIPP in place, we hope for more concerted and coordinated action on groundwater sustainability and ways to quickly harvest lessons learned and bring them forward,” explains Dr. Alvar Closas, IWMI, key scientist in GRIPP. “We are happy to see the early enthusiasm for GRIPP, which bodes well for following through with our mission and continuously growing and strengthening the partnerships.”

Join GRIPP Partners on Tuesday, 5.30pm at the IWMI/WLE Exhibition Booth 27 at Stockholm World Water Week for a Launch Event. This aims to introduce the initiative to like-minded individuals and institutions. Over cocktails, a USA Today movie highlighting the necessity to protect groundwater will be screened.

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### Additional information

- The **International Water Management Institute (IWMI)** is a non-profit, scientific research organization focusing on the sustainable use of water and land resources in developing countries. It is headquartered in Colombo, Sri Lanka, with regional offices across Asia and Africa. IWMI works in partnership with governments, civil society and the private sector to develop scalable agricultural water management solutions that have a real impact on poverty reduction, food security and ecosystem health.  
[www.iwmi.org](http://www.iwmi.org)
- The **CGIAR Research Program on Water, Land and Ecosystems (WLE)** combines the resources of 11 CGIAR Centers, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and numerous national, regional and international partners to provide an integrated approach to natural resource management research. WLE promotes a new approach to sustainable intensification in which a healthy functioning ecosystem is seen as a prerequisite to agricultural development, resilience of food systems and well-being. This program is led by the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), a member of the CGIAR Consortium and is supported by CGIAR, a global research partnership for a food-secure future. [wle.cgiar.org](http://wle.cgiar.org)
- **CGIAR** is a global partnership that unites organizations engaged in research for a food secure future. CGIAR research is dedicated to reducing rural poverty, increasing food security, improving human health and nutrition, and ensuring more sustainable management of natural resources. It is carried out by the 15 centers who are members of the CGIAR Consortium in close collaboration with hundreds of partner organizations, including national and regional research institutes, civil society organizations, academia, and the private sector. [www.cgiar.org](http://www.cgiar.org)

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