

Joint message from the Board Chair and Director General

Can we help achieve the MDGs?

This year the UN's Committee on Sustainable Development discusses "water" as a priority subject: can we achieve the water-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)? It is therefore also a good moment to ask what IWMI can do to help achieve these goals. Water is a contributing factor to many MDGs. The main water-related target – halving the number of people without access to safe and affordable drinking water and sanitation – is one to which IWMI can contribute only marginally. Our work is focused on the goals to reduce poverty and hunger and maintain a healthy environment. But as water is usually only one of many contributing factors, measuring (or claiming) direct impacts on poverty or hunger is not always useful. We do focus sharply, however, on the pathways through which knowledge generated by IWMI and our partners contributes to these goals.

Reviewing the second ten years of research at IWMI

In 1995 IWMI published a volume called "Expanding the Frontiers of Irrigation Management Research: Results of Research and Development at IIMI 1984-1995", authored by Doug Merrey. This reviewed the first ten years of work of IWMI. We now have prepared a second volume that reviews the second ten years, provisionally titled "More Crop Per Drop Revisited". This annual report features brief summaries of the main chapters in this second review.

It shows how IWMI has been very influential in re-shaping the debate on water, food and agriculture.

The basin focus and the idea of open, closed and closing basins; "wet" and "dry" water savings, focusing on recycling and re-use; and the emphasis placed on water productivity—more crop per drop—all have helped to change the thinking on the use of water for food and livelihoods. We feel we now have to take the debate forward with a sharper focus on how IWMI's work helps achieve the MDGs.

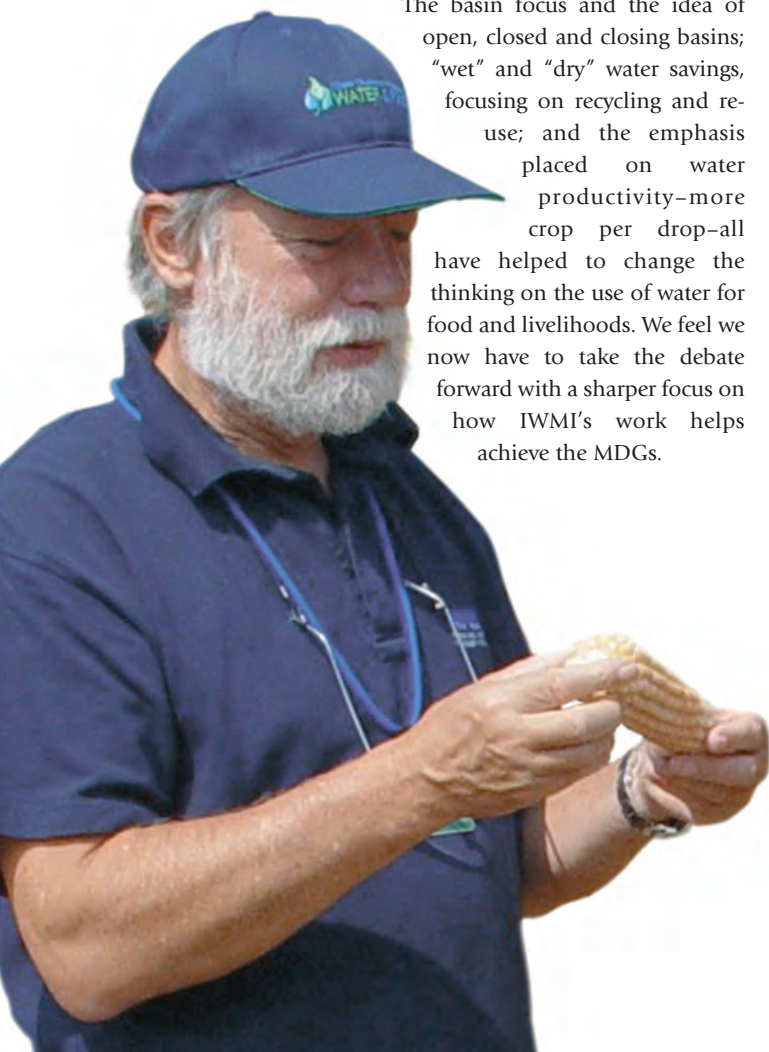


Photo Credit : Sanjini De Silva

Researchers testing soil salinity in the Syr Darya Basin, Central Asia. IWMI identifies and assesses high potential interventions that can improve land and water productivity while maintaining the sustainability of the resource.

A new Framework for IWMI's work

The new framework that is introduced in this report is intended to provide focus to all IWMI work. It does not replace the four new themes but ties them together. It is an attempt to provide a clean, simple structure around which to organise IWMI's work into four blocks of activities.

1. Mapping water productivity: assess water (and land) productivity at basin level for the key crops, complementary livestock/fishery outputs, specific livelihood strategies, and environmental values, spatially disaggregated across the basin.
2. Mapping water poverty: assess spatial patterns of poverty and access of poor people to productive land and water resources throughout the basin.
3. Analysing high potential interventions: identify, assess interventions that can improve water (and land) productivity, the access poor people have to productive water and land resources and the sustainability of natural resource use, i.e. help achieve the MDGs.
4. Assessing impacts: assess the potential impacts of interventions on their contribution towards achieving the MDGs.

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Ambassador Remo Gautschi
IWMI Board Chair

The four new IWMI themes are:

1. **Basin Water Management:** understanding water productivity;
2. **Land, Water and Livelihoods:** improving livelihoods for the rural poor;
3. **Agriculture, Water and Cities:** making an asset out of wastewater; and
4. **Water Management and Environment:** balancing water for food and nature.

Board approved a new management structure that reduces the management team to six persons and creates a more uniform middle management layer. The Board also approved the new thematic structure which provides a sharper focus and reduces the themes from five to four. In addition, the management is pursuing a policy to reduce the number of projects and strengthen project management.

All in all, IWMI is in great shape and ready to take on the challenges that the coming years will bring us.



Ambassador Remo Gautschi
IWMI Board Chair



Professor Frank Rijsberman
IWMI Director General



Photo Credit : Sanjini De Silva

Buffaloes immersed in wastewater from the Musi River, Hyderabad, India. IWMI is looking at options that minimize the health and environmental risks associated with wastewater which is used by many poor farmers in this region.

Change and continuity at IWMI

The IWMI Board has asked management for a period of consolidation after the very rapid growth of the period 2000-2003. At IWMI that "consolidation" still means a healthy growth rate of some 7% (as achieved in 2004 and expected in 2005). It also means a continuous change process to keep adapting our flexible, lean organization to the rapidly changing outside world. In its November 2004 meeting, the

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