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**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION
FOR WESTERN ASIA**

**Consultations on the Restructuring
of ESCWA Programmes**

**31 January - 3 February 1994
Amman - Jordan**

NOTES BY THE EXPERTS

SUGGESTED PRIORITIES FOR THE WATER SECTOR

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SUGGESTED PRIORITIES FOR THE WATER SECTOR

Synopsis

Renewable water resources in the region are limited and range between a meager 70 M3 per capita in Kuwait and Bahrain to about 3500 M3 capita in Iraq. Water in the region is used more for irrigated agriculture than in all other consumptive uses put together. Shortages of water for various uses are frequently encountered. All the countries of the region suffer from chronic deficits in the foreign trade in food commodities.

Priorities

Priorities in the water sector in the region ought to be given to:

- A) Preservation of the water stock against depletion and quality degradation, including data collection and monitoring and establishment of national data banks.
- B) Raising the overall water use efficiency inclusive of efficiencies of storage, conveyance, distribution application and the yields obtained from a unit flow of water.
- C) Improving water management skills and techniques with focus on human resources development.
- D) Increasing the water stock for municipal and industrial purposes through regional interbasin transfers or brackish and seawater desalination.
- E) Increasing the irrigation water supply through the reuse of treated wastewater.
- F) Enhancing regional efforts in research and extension and in technology transfer.
- G) Promoting regional cooperation efforts and projects, in tandem with progress in the Middle East Peace negotiations.

Programs

Programs can be reoriented to cope with the requirements of the above priorities. Emphasis can be placed on certain priorities more than others in accordance with the situation of each of the member countries.

