27th UN-Water Meeting

Expert Group on Water Scarcity

1. Input prepared by:
FAO

2. If membership is already established, please list the Expert Group member organizations. Please also attach the Expert Group's mailing list.
UNESCO; UNCCD; UNEP; WMO

3. Please describe the Expert Group's proposed specific terms of reference.
Water use has been growing globally at more than twice the rate of population increase in the last century, and an increasing number of regions are reaching the limit at which water services can be sustainably delivered. The concept of scarcity is complex to be defined as it implies different dimensions or facets. It can be defined as an imbalance between "supply" and "demand" that varies according to local conditions. It intensifies with increasing demand by users and with the decreasing quantity and quality of the resource. The UN-Water Expert Group on Water Scarcity is intended to provide a platform to: 1) Coordinate collaboration between UN-Water members and partners to make effective use of available resources and expertise in addressing the growing imbalance between "supply" and "demand" of water; and 2) Increase political prioritization of water scarcity through policy debate to accelerate progress towards the achievement of SDG 6.

4. If the Expert Group is responsible for delivering an output as per the UN-Water Work Programme 2016-2017, please provide a progress update.
The expected output from the Expert Group is an Analytical Brief on Water Efficiency. The work to develop the brief has yet to commence.

5. Any other comments.
FAO has launched during the COP22 in Marrakesh a new global initiative on water scarcity called: Coping with water scarcity in agriculture: a global framework for action in a changing climate. Several UN-Water members such as UNCCD, UNESCO and UN-Flores are now partners of this initiative. The Synthesis Report of SDG6 will cover the water efficiency issue. With some extra refinements from the Expert Group members, it can be used as the basis for the Analytical Brief on Water Efficiency.