Ms Cindy Hensley McCain  
Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP)

Statement on the launch of the UN-Water System-wide Strategy for Water and Sanitation

Water is a fundamental building block of food security. But each year, more and more communities are struggling to access safe and clean water due to climate change, land degradation, and the collapse of ecosystems.

WFP welcomes the UN System-Wide Strategy for Water and Sanitation as a key step in tackling water management in an integrated and multidisciplinary way. We will work closely with UN and other partners to support the Collaborative Implementation Plan.

First, we will continue providing emergency relief operations to protect the most food-insecure communities from the impacts of water-related disasters.

Second, WFP will increase work to strengthen the resilience of communities: supporting integrated water resources management through land and ecosystem restoration projects, and nutrition and school meals programs.

Many hunger hotspots are clustered in fragile dryland regions. WFP believes that scaling-up and integrating land restoration and water resource management programs in these regions must be a priority.

The CIP can provide a strong focus on land restoration to improve the capacity of ecosystems to capture and store water for domestic and farming use. It can also support construction of water infrastructure in these areas. These investments must be protected by early-warning systems for floods and droughts, to ensure hard-won gains are not reversed by climate change.

Leadership and effective collaboration will be critically important to drive future progress.

WFP stands ready to leverage our global field presence to support joint action on integrated water resource management, and we will harness the expertise of a wide range of partners in the most fragile and vulnerable settings.

The CIP will add real value. By strengthening joined-up and integrated programs and monitoring systems, the CIP can help build the case for vital investment in water access programs - and deliver lasting improvements for the vulnerable communities we serve.