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# Milestones

**Study the past if you would divine the future.**

Confucius

**The road to sustainable management of water resources has been paved with thirty years of international conferences and decisions. This chapter gives the highlights of these major worldwide efforts.**

This table is available on the WWAP web site, with hyperlinks to the full text of the outcomes: <http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/milestones>

Dates	Events	Outcomes	Quotations
1972	<p><b>UN Conference on the Human Environment, Stockholm</b> Main issues: preservation and enhancement of the human environment</p>	Declaration of the UN Conference on the Human Environment	'A point has been reached in history when we must shape our actions throughout the world with a more prudent care for their environmental consequences.' (6. Declaration of the UN Conference on the Human Environment)
1977	<p><b>UN Conference on Water, Mar del Plata</b> Main issues: assessment of water resources, water use and efficiency</p>	Mar del Plata Action Plan	'relatively little importance has been attached to water resources systematic measurement. The processing and compilation of data have also been seriously neglected.' (Recommendation A: Assessment of water resources, Mar del Plata Action Plan)
1981–1990	<p><b>International Drinking Water and Sanitation Decade</b></p>		'The goal of the Decade was that, by the end of 1990, all people should possess an adequate water supply and satisfactory means of excrete and sullage disposal. This was indeed an ambitious target as it has been estimated that it would have involved the provision of water and sanitation services to over 650,000 people per day for the entire ten year period. Although major efforts were made by government and international organisations to meet this target, it was not achieved.' (Choguill, C.; Francys, R.; Cotton, A. 1993. Planning for Water and Sanitation.)
1990	<p><b>Global Consultation on Safe Water and Sanitation for the 1990s, New Delhi</b> Main issues: safe drinking water, environmental sanitation</p>	New Delhi Statement: 'Some for all rather than more for some'	'Safe water and proper means of waste disposal ... must be at the center of integrated water resources management' (Environment and health, New Delhi Statement)
	<p><b>World Summit for Children, New York</b> Main issues: health, food supply</p>	World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children	'We will promote the provision of clean water in all communities for all their children, as well as universal access to sanitation.' (18. World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children)
	<p><b>Beginning of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (1990–2000)</b></p>	Recognition of the increased general vulnerability of people and property to natural disasters	'to reduce through concerted international action, especially in developing countries, the loss of life, property damage and social and economic disruption caused by natural disasters...' (Resolution 44/236 of the UN General Assembly)

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1992	<p><b>International Conference on Water and the Environment, Dublin</b></p> <p>Main issues: economic value of water, women, poverty, resolving conflicts, natural disasters, awareness</p>	<p>Dublin Statement on Water and Sustainable Development</p>	<p>Principle 1: 'Fresh water is a finite and vulnerable resource, essential to sustain life, development and the environment'</p> <p>Principle 2: 'Water development and management should be based on a participatory approach, involving users, planners and policy-makers at all levels'</p> <p>Principle 3: 'Women play a central part in the provision, management and safeguarding of water'</p> <p>Principle 4: 'Water has an economic value in all its competing uses and should be recognized as an economic good' (Guiding principles. <i>The Dublin Statement on Water and Sustainable Development</i>)</p>
	<p><b>UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED Earth Summit), Rio de Janeiro</b></p> <p>Main issues: cooperation and participation, water economics, drinking water and sanitation, human settlements, sustainable development, food production, climate change</p>	<p>Rio Declaration on Environment and Development</p> <p>Agenda 21</p>	<p>'establishing a new and equitable global partnership through the creation of new levels of cooperation among States, key sector societies and people' (Rio Declaration)</p> <p>'The holistic management of freshwater ... and the integration of sectoral water plans and programmes within the framework of national economic and social policy, are of paramount importance for action in the 1990s and beyond.' (Section 2, Chapter 18, Agenda 21)</p>
1994	<p><b>Ministerial Conference on Drinking Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation, Noordwijk</b></p> <p>Main issues: drinking water supply and sanitation</p>	<p>Programme of Action</p>	<p>'To assign high priority to programmes designed to provide basic sanitation and excreta disposal systems to urban and rural areas.' (Action Programme)</p>
	<p><b>UN International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo</b></p>	<p>Programme of Action</p>	<p>'To ensure that population, environmental and poverty eradication factors are integrated in sustainable development policies, plans and programmes.' (Chapter III – Interrelationships between population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development, C- Population and Environment, Programme of Action)</p>

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1995	<b>World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen</b> Main issues: poverty, water supply and sanitation	Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development	'To focus our efforts and policies to address the root causes of poverty and to provide for the basic needs of all. These efforts should include the provision of ... safe drinking water and sanitation.' (Chapter I - Resolutions adopted by the Summit, Commitment 2.b., Copenhagen Declaration)
	<b>UN Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing</b> Main issues: gender issues, water supply and sanitation	Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action	'Ensure the availability of and universal access to safe drinking water and sanitation and put in place effective public distribution systems as soon as possible.' (106 x, Beijing Declaration)
1996	<b>UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul</b> Sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world	The Habitat Agenda	'We shall also promote healthy living environments, especially through the provision of adequate quantities of safe water and effective management of waste.' (10. The Habitat Agenda, Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements)
	<b>World Food Summit, Rome</b> Main issues: food, health, water and sanitation	Rome Declaration on World Food Security	'To combat environmental threats to food security, in particular, drought and desertification ... restore and rehabilitate the natural resource base, including water and watersheds, in depleted and overexploited areas to achieve greater production.' (Plan of Action, Objective 3.2, Rome Declaration)
1997	<b>First World Water Forum, Marrakech</b> Main issues: water and sanitation, management of shared waters, preserving ecosystems, gender equity, efficient use of water	Marrakech Declaration	'to recognize the basic human needs to have access to clean water and sanitation, to establish an effective mechanism for management of shared waters, to support and preserve ecosystems, to encourage the efficient use of water.' (Marrakech Declaration)
1998	<b>International Conference on Water and Sustainable Development, Paris</b>	Paris Declaration on Water and Sustainable Development	'to improve co-ordination between UN Agencies and Programmes and other international organizations, to ensure periodic consideration within the UN system ... [To] emphasize the need for continuous political commitment and broad-based public support to ensure the achievement of sustainable development, management and protection, and equitable use of freshwater resources, and the importance of civil society to support this commitment.' (Paris Declaration)

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2000	<p><b>Second World Water Forum, The Hague</b> Main issues: water for people, water for food, water and nature, water in rivers, sovereignty, interbasin transfer, water education</p>	World Water Vision: Making Water Everybody's Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Involve all stakeholders in integrated management;</li> <li>• Move to full-cost pricing of water services;</li> <li>• Increase public funding for research and innovation;</li> <li>• Increase cooperation in international water basins;</li> <li>• Massively increase investments in water'</li> </ul> (Vision Statement and Key Messages, World Water Vision)
	7 challenges: Meeting basic needs, Securing the food supply, Protecting ecosystems, Sharing water resources, Managing risks, Valuing water, Governing water wisely	Ministerial Conference on Water Security in the 21st Century	<p>'We will continue to support the UN system to re-assess periodically the state of freshwater resources and related ecosystems, to assist countries where appropriate, to develop systems to measure progress towards the realization of targets and to report in the biennial World Water Development Report as part of the overall monitoring of Agenda 21.' (7.B, Ministerial Declaration)</p>
		UN Millennium Declaration	<p>'We resolve ... to halve, by the year 2015 ... the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water.' (19, UN Millennium Declaration)</p>
	<p><b>End of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (1990–2000)</b></p>		
2001	<p><b>International Conference on Freshwater, Bonn</b> Water – key to sustainable development</p> <p>Main issues: governance, mobilizing financial resources, capacity-building, sharing knowledge</p>	Ministerial Declaration	<p>'Combating poverty is the main challenge for achieving equitable and sustainable development, and water plays a vital role in relation to human health, livelihood, economic growth as well as sustaining ecosystems.'</p> (Ministerial Declaration)
		Recommendations for action	<p>'The conference recommends priority actions under the following three headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance</li> <li>• Mobilising financial resources</li> <li>• Capacity building and sharing knowledge'</li> </ul> (Bonn Recommendations for Action)

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2002	<b>World Summit on Sustainable Development, Rio+10, Johannesburg</b>	Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development  Plan of Implementation	<p>'We recognize that poverty eradication, changing consumption and production patterns, and protecting and managing the natural resource base for economic and social development are overarching objectives of, and essential requirements for sustainable development.' (Para. 11, Declaration on Sustainable Development)</p> <p>'The provision of clean drinking water and adequate sanitation is necessary to protect human health and the environment. In this respect, we agree to halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water (as outlined in the Millennium Declaration) and the proportion of people who do not have access to basic sanitation ...' (II.7, Plan of Implementation)</p> <p>'Develop integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans by 2005, with support to developing countries, through actions at all levels to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Develop and implement national/regional strategies, plans and programmes with regard to integrated river basin management,</li> <li>b) Employ the full range of policy instruments, including regulation, monitoring, voluntary measures, market and information-based tools.</li> <li>c) Improve the efficient use of water resources.'</li> </ul> <p>(IV.24, Plan of Implementation)</p>
2003	<b>International Year of Freshwater</b>	<b>Third World Water Forum, Kyoto</b>	<p>'Water is likely to become a growing source of tension and fierce competition between nations, if present trends continue, but it can also be a catalyst for co-operation. The International Year of Freshwater can play a vital role in generating the action needed – not only by governments but also by civil society, communities, the business sector and individuals all over the world.' (UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan)</p>