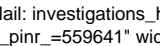




Austria Joins World Banks Water Partnership Program

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New US\$5.4 million contribution will scale up efforts to help countries strengthen water resources management and water service delivery
The Government of Austria has become the fourth donor to the World Banks Water Partnership Program (WPP), joining the United Kingdom, The Netherlands and Denmark. The new contribution will help increase the World Banks efforts to help countries become more resilient to climate change and achieve their development goals through improved water management and services.
Water is fundamental for growth, poverty reduction and shared prosperity. Yet, growing populations and economies, as well as climate change have placed unprecedented pressures on water. Today 1 out of every 5 people live in countries with absolute water scarcity, making water security a challenge for many countries.
As a response to the challenge, the World Bank launched the WPP in 2009 to offer innovative solutions that work at the nexus of water with energy, food, the environment and human development.
"Countries will not be able to achieve their goals - human development, livable cities, and food and energy security - without improving the way they manage water and provide adequate water services to their people," said Harald Waiglein, Director General at the Federal Ministry of Finance of Austria. "We all have the responsibility to help countries protect their people and economies and channeling our support through the Water Partnership Program will allow us to do that," he said.
Through more than 200 activities, the WPP is supporting World Bank financed projects in 60 countries all over the world and it is undertaking global initiatives that work across sectors such as energy and agriculture to help countries plan investments better. WPP also has developed global programs and initiatives on climate change, earth observation through satellites, water-related disaster risk management, water utility reform, and integrated urban water management.
The US\$5.4 million Austrian contribution will enable the WPP to further strengthen its support to World Bank water-related projects and help facilitate more cross-regional and cross sectoral learning.
"The worlds water challenges are too large and complex to tackle for any single partner alone," said Diego Rodriguez, WPP Program Manager. "Teaming up with the government of Austria will allow us to go further in assuring that water is properly considered in all development work. We are very grateful for this support and as this will allow us to scale up smart solutions to overcome poverty through improved water management.
The WPP is a World Bank-administered program which aims to enhance the World Banks efforts to reduce poverty by: i) mainstreaming pragmatic approaches to water resources management (WRM); ii) improving the quality and effectiveness of water supply and sanitation (WSS); and iii) mainstreaming WSS and WRM in climate-resilient, inclusive green growth. The Program finances activities in all Bank regions and water sub-sectors and supports the Water Expert Team (WET), a technical support service that mobilizes high-level global expertise to address complex water challenges in Bank projects.
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