

# **1<sup>st</sup> Non-Conventional Water Resources Webinar**

*Sunday, March 10, 2024, at 11:00 am – 12:30 pm*

**Organized by the Arab Water Council  
through its Affiliated  
Non-Conventional Water Resources Platform (NCWR-PI)**

## **MINUTES of 1<sup>st</sup> NCWR WEBINAR**

**Moderator:** Dr. Amel Azab, SDG-CI Facility Project Coordinator, AWC Technical Dept.

**Rapporteur:** Dr. Mary Halim, Technical Consultant, AWC

**NCWR-PI Coordinators & IT:** Eng. Hossam Gebril & Eng. Stephan Ihab

### **Introduction**

The Moderator (Dr. Amel Azab) started by welcoming all participants who attended (physically or online) the first non-conventional water resources webinar organized by the Arab Water Council through its affiliated non-conventional water resources platform (NCWR-PI). She emphasized that the Arab Water Council has been doing a lot of activities and efforts to develop this platform, which will be presented during this occasion, wishing everyone to have a very fruitful and interesting one-and-a-half hour event. She then invited H.E. Prof. Dr. Mahmoud Abu-Zeid, President of the Arab Water Council and former Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation of Egypt, to give his Opening Remarks.

### **Opening Remarks**

**By: H.E. Prof. Dr. Mahmoud Abu-Zeid, President Arab Water Council (AWC)**

In the name of the Arab Water Council, H.E. Dr. Abu-Zeid expressed that he is honored to welcome each and everyone attending this 1<sup>st</sup> NCWR webinar, with the aim of discussing the most important issues related to the emerging water challenges in the Arab region and the innovative solutions to these challenges that include the use of non-conventional water resources. On this occasion, His Excellency expressed his pleasure to announce for the preliminary launching of the NCWR-PI, including the interactive Network of NCWR Experts specialized in the fields of desalination, reuse of agricultural drainage water and treated wastewater, brackish groundwater, and water harvesting. He indicated that the Platform website also included events, success stories and publications in this domain, and pointed out that AWC is keen to offer annual recognition awards for creativity and innovation in the field of adaptation to CC by expanding the use of NCWR.

## **Introductory Speech**

**“NCWR as a Strategic Solution to Water Scarcity Challenges”**

**By: Prof. Dr. Walid Abderrahman, Vice-President AWC & Professor of Water Resources Engineering and Management, (formerly) King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals, Dhahran, KSA**

**Prof. Dr. Walid Abderrahman** expressed that he is glad to be part of this day in the first non-conventional water resources webinar organized by the Arab Water Council. As the title of his presentation indicates, his main focus was on global water scarcity challenges in general, water crisis in the Arab Region in particular, the importance of expanding the use of non-conventional water resources in the Arab Region and related concerns. He also highlighted examples of successful experiences in the safe reuse of industrial wastewater and maximizing the benefits gained from this resource in Saudi Arabia (for more details see attached presentation).

## **Keynote Speech**

**“Expanding the Use of NCWR: Best Practices and Lessons Learned”**

**By: Prof. Dr. Redouane Choukr-Allah, Mohamed VI Polytechnic University, Agricultural Innovation and Technology Transfer, Benguerir, Morocco**

**Prof. Dr. Redouane Choukr-Allah** emphasized that, in our journey to achieve water security, we must focus on expanding the use of non-conventional water resources. His keynote speech covered best practices and lessons learned from various projects and initiatives aimed at integrating non-traditional methods of water management in agriculture and urban planning. The success stories and innovative approaches he presented highlighted how these practices can be adapted and implemented across the Arab region to address water scarcity challenges effectively (for more details see attached presentation).

## **Keynote Presentation**

**“Overview of the NCWR Platform & Experts Network”**

**By: Prof. Dr. Tarek El-Samman, Professor of Water Resources, Senior Advisor and Member of AWC Board of Governors**

**Prof. Dr. Tarek El-Samman** explained that the NCWR Platform (NCWR-PI) and Experts Network aim to consolidate expertise, improve studies, and share successful experiences in non-conventional water resources. He stressed that this initiative is crucial for fostering cooperation among experts, researchers, and practitioners in related fields, ensuring that knowledge and innovations are disseminated and applied effectively to address water scarcity issues in the Arab region. He also emphasized that our goal is to create a dynamic and collaborative environment that supports the development and implementation of sustainable water management strategies.

- **Open Discussion**

The Moderator opened the floor for discussion and invited the participants to ask questions and share their insights on the topics presented.

**Discussion Points:**

- **Dr. Khaled Abu-Zeid** raised a point regarding the competition on treated wastewater between different sectors and how can we deal with this issue. He indicated that there is a lot of competition among sectors for the use of treated wastewater, whether for industrial, agricultural, or urban landscaping purposes, and asked how can we address this competition through pricing or other mechanisms.

**Response from Panelists:**

- **Dr. Walid Abderrahman** responded that "This is a significant issue, particularly in urban areas where the demand for treated wastewater is high. We need sustainable services, recovery systems, and appropriate tariffs to manage the competition effectively." He added that "Industrial sectors, for example, are often willing to pay higher tariffs for treated wastewater, which can help in managing the demand and ensuring equitable distribution."

**Closing and Wrap-Up ... Way Forward**

**By: H.E. Dr. Hussein El-Atfy, Secretary-General AWC**

**Dr. Hussein El-Atfy** thanked all attendees for their active participation in this webinar. He indicated that today's discussions have highlighted the critical role of non-conventional water resources in addressing water scarcity in the Arab region. He added that, moving forward, we will continue to build on the insights and experiences shared today, fostering greater collaboration and innovation in water management, and concluded that we look forward to the continued engagement and contributions to the NCWR Platform and Experts Network hoping to see everyone in future events that will be announced in due time.