



Cairo Declaration

The Cairo Ministerial Declaration of the Delta Coalition

16 October 2018

We, Ministers and High Representatives responsible for water affairs, environment and sustainable development of deltas from eight countries out of thirteen Member States throughout the world namely, Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mozambique, the Netherlands, and Vietnam, assembled in Cairo, Egypt on 16 October 2018, have already joined the Delta Coalition, to address the challenges that the deltaic countries face.

Recalling the outcomes of:

- The first Ministerial Declaration of the Delta Coalition in Rotterdam, The Netherlands on 10 May 2016.
- The second Ministerial Declaration of the Delta Coalition in Dhaka, Bangladesh 28 July 2017 outlining the exigency of having the Coalition for the wellbeing of the peoples of the deltaic countries.

Affirming that:

- The Delta Coalition is the world's first international coalition of governments that have formed a partnership to deal with inclusive and sustainable development in deltas.
- By combining economic development with adaptation and preventive measures reducing climate change risks and strengthening resilience, will allow delta countries to join forces to stimulate sharing best practices and innovation.
- Increasing opportunities for financing will facilitate the implementation of projects that will reduce vulnerability to climate change.

Confirming:

- Importance to be fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.
- The Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing.
- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement on climate change.
- The necessity for upstream-downstream cooperation and coordination in all aspects especially with regards to infrastructure development in accordance with international water law principles in order to prevent causing significant harm.

- The inclusive and sustainable development of urban deltas will play a key role in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and should give an important impetus to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 6 and 11 and other related goals and targets, such as paragraphs 64 and 68 of the New Urban Agenda.
- These SDGs are calling for cities and human settlements to be inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable and ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

Expressing

- Deep concern at the findings of the 5th Assessment report, findings of the Global Warming of 1.5 degree Celsius IPCC special report and expected 6th Assessment report of the IPCC that due to climate change, urban areas will face increased risks inter-alia, for people, health, assets, economies and ecosystems and that rural areas will experience major brunt on water availability and supply, food security, infrastructure, agricultural income including the shifts in the production areas of food and non-food crops which will affect the achievements in food and water security, poverty reduction, raising the income level of the people in the deltaic regions, and that the implementation of Sustainable Development Agenda-2030 is necessary for sustainably managing and protecting coastal ecosystems.

Acknowledging that:

- Urbanization and densification of urban and rural land have resulted in the disappearance of natural land-water transition zones, which are important as buffers in times of high water levels and droughts.
- The decrease of the natural resilience capacity of deltas is reinforced by sea level rise and other impacts due to climate change, which results in increased flood risk, river bank erosion, coastal erosion, sedimentation, storm surge, drought, water logging, water scarcity, water availability and quality problems and salinization.
- Land subsidence caused by intense drainage, groundwater extraction, and tectonic dynamics often results in levels below mean sea level. This further increases the vulnerability of urbanized deltas to climate change impacts and flood risk, with increasing numbers of victims as a result, and subsequent economic and ecological losses.
- Natural causes as well as unplanned, uncoordinated and disproportionate human development activities, critical infrastructure on water bodies, demographic change, common and differentiated impacts of climate change, rapid and unplanned urbanization are seriously affecting riverine, marine and coastal ecosystems, biodiversity and ecosystem goods, and disrupting lives and livelihood activities of the peoples of the deltas.
- Climate change and sea level rise requires mitigation and adaptation measures on the immediate and longer term to stop the ongoing propensity of displacement of the coastal people.

Stressing:

- The exigency of fostering closer cooperation among the deltaic countries irrespective of socio-politico-economic setting and dynamics at sub-regional, regional and international levels to address the issues of trans-boundary Rivers, the specific and common obstacles as well as diverse geopolitical realities and challenges that are inherent to the deltaic countries can be addressed if delta countries work together with strong political resolve and commitment at sub-regional, regional and international levels.

Aware that:

- Capacity building and innovative methodologies and technologies need to be further developed – both for national and local governments as well as for the private sector – to optimize delta management and ensure sustainable development.
- The UN/World Bank High Level Panel on Water agreed that the Delta Coalition is an effective and inspirational collaborative to deliver on the 2030 Agenda.

Urging to address:

- The enormous gap in funding investments in sustainable delta development including structural and non-structural disaster risk reduction measures, knowledge development and exchange, training and capacity building.
- Thus to close this gap using existing resources more efficiently and with combined additional financial resources from all sources: public investment budgets, private sector, capital markets, and community based finance, user and polluter charges; as well as international development financing from public, multilateral and private sources, particularly for developing countries to reflect the acute needs in urbanizing deltas. The latter will particularly support the mitigation and adaptation of climate change impacts and natural disasters on the most vulnerable groups with gender-responsive actions.

Decide to:

- Commit to raise awareness at all levels in the deltaic countries in tandem with the Non-Governmental Organizations, academia and experts with a view to promoting and deploying pragmatic response to the pressing delta issues.
- Commit to include new members and observers, and develop relations with Non-Governmental Organizations and academia in order to strengthen and enhance the knowledge base of the Coalition at international level. Also to increase and demonstrate the visibility of the Coalition in various multilateral and international conferences and programmes.
- Emphasize on generating adaptive/alternative livelihood activities in the coastal regions where various manifestations of the adverse impacts of climate change are obvious.
- Commit to work together in the backdrop of the impacts of climate change, risks and vulnerability of the deltaic countries to extreme climate events like flood, cyclone and drought and thereby adopt preventive, adaptive and resilience measures and undertake project based activities and programmes.
- Agree on developing planned urbanization and sustainably manage the urbanized areas as well as promote inclusive and sustainable rural economies in the deltaic region.
- Pursue integrated development and sustainable delta management and cross border cooperation for basin wide management of the trans-boundary/international rivers.
- Agree to actively address the situation emanating from the permanent loss of cultivable land and human habitats owing to coastal soil erosion, sea level rise, salinization and coastal flooding, subsidence in the urban areas owing to over extraction of groundwater.
- Urge Delta Countries to take immediate climate action – referring to the IPCC 1.5 degree Celsius report, in the context of the specific vulnerability of deltaic regions, and invest in early warning systems, long – term plans and resilience projects while also preparing for the consequences of climate disasters like displacement of coastal communities.
- Strengthen efforts to mobilize and allocate sufficient financial resources from private sector, bilateral development partners, and international financing institutions for inclusive and sustainable development and management of the deltas, especially oriented towards developing countries and addressing their specific challenges, vulnerabilities and risks.

- Resolve to develop strategic partnership with global key financial institutions, potential Non-Governmental organizations in order to mobilize financing for disaster risks reduction measures, water infrastructure development and management, knowledge development, and capacity development.
- Call on the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and other IFIs and MDBs to make deltas a priority.
- Extend mutual cooperation in research, innovation and technology transfer as well as capacity building, and share solutions with a view to realizing project based activities on critical delta issues.
- Agree that the start of the Global Center on Adaptation and the launching of the Global Commission on Adaptation (GCA) are an opportunity for the Delta Coalition and agree to work closely together to Accelerate Adaptation for our deltas.
- Promote the potential of the young generation as agents for change and innovation in the search for solutions on pressing delta issues.
- Initiate drafting a Framework Agreement of the Delta Coalition to be discussed during the next Ministerial Conference.
- Consider establishing a permanent technical secretary for the Delta Coalition that can support the implementation of the Delta Coalition agenda, action plans and activities.
- Express our support to Japan, the next chair of Delta Coalition, to continue and promote the agenda and activities of the coalition during the coming year.
- Express our deep appreciation to the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt for hosting the Third Ministerial Conference and working group meeting, and extending warm hospitality to the delegates and infusing practicable thoughts/ideas to carry forward the agenda of the Coalition.

Adopted at Cairo, Egypt on 16 October 2018

List of the participating countries:

1. Bangladesh
2. Egypt
3. Indonesia
4. Japan
5. Mozambique
6. Republic of Korea
7. The Netherlands
8. Vietnam