

## Water and Food Security

During the second half of the 20th century, world population had a twofold increase, agriculture doubled food production and developing countries increased per capita food consumption by 30 percent. However, while feeding the world and producing a diverse range of non-food crops such as cotton, rubber and industrial oils in an increasingly productive way, agriculture also confirmed its position as the biggest user of water on the globe. Irrigation now claims close to 70 percent of all freshwater appropriated for human use.

Within the context of demographic growth, increased competition for water and improved attention to environmental issues, water for food remains a core issue that can no longer be tackled through a national approach. New forms of water management in agriculture, including rainfed and irrigated agriculture, watershed management in inland fisheries and aquaculture, and livestock and rangeland management need to be explored and implemented in a comprehensive way.

Farmers are at the centre of an process of change and need to be encouraged and guided, through appropriate incentives and governance practices, to contribute to national economic and biodiversity and minimize their negative impacts. A goal that will only be achieved if the appropriate policies are in place. Irrigation in Asia

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- **Integrated watershed management**

