

BIG STORY
big story

Climate change threatening freshwater supply: experts

● Freshwater resources to shrink by between 50 to 100m cubic metres of water per year

● Requested \$9.8 million from United Nations' Green Climate Fund

● GCF board meeting is being held in Manama

● GCF considering 20 new funding proposals this year

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Mohammed Zafran



A desalination plant in Al-Hidd

Experts in Bahrain's water sector believes that Bahrain is 'severely threatened' by the impacts of climate change, according to a government document to a UN body.

Bahrain would remain under

significant danger from climate change if steps are not taken to combat the effects. This was revealed in a document filed by the government to the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

The government has also applied for nearly \$10 million from

the GCF. The 104-page document which was filed by the government contained comments from the Supreme Council of Environment (SCE) sharing its concern about Bahrain's reducing freshwater resources.

"Bahrain, a Small Island

Developing State, is severely threatened by climate change. The country's water sector is, in particular, facing threats from i) rising temperatures causing increases in water demand across all sectors; ii) sea level rise causing saline intrusion into aquifers and iii) rising temperatures and greater intensity of rainfall causing reduced rates of aquifer recharge.

In combination, these threats are likely to reduce Bahrain's freshwater resources by at least 50 to 100 million m3 of water per year in the short-term," SCE stated.

According to the comments in the document, Innovative solutions need to be adopted by the Bahraini public, the private sector and government to manage the expected reduction in water resources from climate change and do so in a manner that is not only climate-resilient but also socially, environmentally and financially sustainable.

The document stated that Bahrain is seeking \$9.8 million of funding to implement 'critical interventions'.

The project, according to the document, will facilitate transformational change within Bahrain's water sector by building technical and institutional capacity to monitor and model climate change impacts on water resources, mainstreaming

climate resilience into sectoral water management planning, developing new policy and legislative frameworks (including water tariff reforms), and designing new financial instruments.

Kingdom will also raise public awareness on the need for water resources under climate change conditions through demand management and re-use of greywater.

The project interventions, the report says, will directly benefit 130,500 people including small-scale farmers and low-income groups who are the most vulnerable to the climate change impact of the reduced availability of water.

Explaining the current initiatives in place, the document stated, "The Kingdom of Bahrain has several current initiatives underway to improve how the country manages its water resources under climate change conditions. These include research on the dynamics of the national aquifers; the development of a national water strategy; and demand management campaigns."

Oil minister congratulates Green Climate Fund CEO



Javier Manzanares

Shaikh Mohammed

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Minister of Oil, Shaikh Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, has congratulated Javier Manzanares on his appointment as a Chief Executive Officer of the Green Climate Fund.

The minister stressed that this appointment is for the efforts of Javier and for his high skills in the field of climate.

The minister expressed hope that the CEO will bring about more achievements in enhancing cooperation for the implementation of several sustainable development

projects in the field of climate change, in order to reduce the environmental risks resulting from pollution.

Shaikh Mohammed highly appreciated the role played by the GCF in financing various environmental projects aimed at encouraging Member States to shift towards low-emission development paths and being capable of adapting to climate change.

It is worth mentioning that the Kingdom of Bahrain is hosting the 21st meeting of the Green Climate Fund now during the period 15-21 October 2018.

Depletion rate well above global average: official

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Rising temperatures and increasing saline intrusion are rapidly shrinking Bahrain's freshwater resources, a spokesman for Bahrain's environment council has told *the Guardian*.

According to the official, the climate change effects are expected to reduce Bahrain's freshwater resources by between 50 to 100 million cubic metres of water per year in the short-term.

This, according to the environment council spokesman, is well above the global average and posing a unique risk to the kingdom's water security.

"Bahrain's application to the Green Climate Fund is about addressing the severe threat posed by global climate change to the kingdom's freshwater supply,"

Bahrain's application to the Green Climate Fund is about addressing the severe threat posed by global climate change to the kingdom's freshwater supply

BAHRAIN'S ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL SPOKESMAN



A general view of Bahrain

the spokesman told the *Guardian* referring to Bahrain's request for a \$10 million assistance from the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

"As a committed signatory to the Paris agreement, the Kingdom has already taken significant steps to counteract the impact of climate change, including the development of a new national water strategy. We now seek assistance from the GCF to help support these critical interventions," the statement adds.

Kingdom's report will be discussed during the third and final meeting of the GCF Board this year which is being hosted by the Kingdom of Bahrain in Manama.

The meeting which began on 15 October and concludes on 21

October will consider 20 new funding proposals from its Accredited Entities valued at USD 1.1 billion, which are targeted at low-emission, climate-resilient development.

Alongside the consideration of new project proposals, the board will also discuss the accreditation of 16 new project partners, as well as a number of policy proposals, including those designed to strengthen and streamline project approval processes.

The Green Climate Fund is governed by a Board of 24 members representing developed and developing countries equally. The meeting will be co-chaired by Paul Oquist and Lennart Båge, Board Co-Chairs for 2018.

GCF board, in its March 2018 meeting, approved 23 projects, valued together at USD1,093.5 million of GCF funding. The approvals brought the GCF portfolio to a total of 76 projects and programmes, amounting to USD3,730.2 million in GCF funding to assist developing countries in their low emission and climate resilient development.

The meeting in Manama is being attended by more than 300 participants, including observers from civil society and private sector organisations, National Designated Authorities (NDAs), which are the national conduits to the Fund, and Accredited Entities and other partners who assist in delivering climate finance to developing countries.