

# Preface

Climate change is and will continue to be one of the central issues in the world's agenda. The 16th Conference of Parties (COP-15) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Cancun, Mexico, in December 2010 has reiterated how much still needs to be done in order to tackle the various challenges climate change and its various ramifications pose to mankind.

This book, prepared as a follow-up to the third online climate conference CLIMATE 2010/KLIMA 2010, held on 1–7 November 2010, focuses on *Climate Change and the Sustainable Management of Water Resources*. There are two key arguments for the choice of this particular topic:

- First, it is widely believed that climate change has a serious impact on global water supplies and may worsen water scarcity—a problem which threatens a large part of the world already today. Under present conditions, approximately 1.2 billion people—especially in developing countries—have no access to drinking water. In order to address this problem, the United Nations has set the goal of increasing access to a further 600 million people by 2015, i.e. better access to drinking water for around 100 million people per year between 2010 and 2015.
- Second, there is a pressing need to use the presently available water resources, which are very scarce in some areas, more sustainably. Even though in parts of Africa, Latin America and the Middle East water resources are already scarce, the proportion of water wasted partly to leaks but also due to the lack of adequate systems to retain, recycle and reuse water is considerably high. Urgent action is needed to address this issue to keep up the UN targets.

The thematic focus of this book, which is also prepared in the context of the Interreg IVB (North Sea) project North Sea Skills Integration and New Technologies (SKINT), will allow in-depth discussions and support the search for global and regional solutions for the impacts climate change has on water supplies and will address the need to promote sustainable water use across the world.

Part I contains a set of papers on geochemical and physical impacts of climate change on water supplies, as well as on aspects of modelling, forecasting and

software applications. Part II includes papers on the socioeconomic aspects of climate change in relation to water supplies and use, whereas Part III presents papers on the links between climate change, policy-making and sustainable water use. Part IV presents a number of projects and initiatives, which focus on addressing the links between climate change and sustainable water use, including educational and awareness-raising initiatives.

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It is hoped that this book, which is Volume 3 of the “Climate Change Management Series”, initiated as part of the “International Climate Change Information Programme” (ICCIP), will be useful and allow a better understanding of the problems, barriers, challenges, opportunities and possibilities related to the promotion of the sustainable use of water resources worldwide.

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