

Foreword

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Water resources all over the world are expected to come under greater pressure in the future unless water resource management practices can be significantly improved. Consequently, many countries, organizations and institutions are attempting to improve management practices, including through legislation and regulation, so that efficient, rational and sustainable use of this resource is possible in the coming years. Such improvements must occur for all different use sectors, including domestic, agriculture, industry, energy, tourism and recreation.

Within this overall framework of increasing needs and therefore growing pressure on available water resources, there are many ongoing debates on how best to improve urban water management. Some of these issues include: achieving universal access to safer water in developing countries; sustainable management of water resources; infrastructure development; maintaining quality; improving management efficiency; better regulation and control of industry; efficient and equitable tariff systems; and broadening supply using non-conventional water sources.

To address the complex issues associated with the provisioning of urban water and wastewater management services, the Third World Centre for Water Management in Mexico and the University of Granada, with the support of the AguaGranada Foundation, organized the *Workshop on Water Pricing and Roles of Public and Private Sectors in Efficient Urban Water Management*, which was held in Granada, 9–11 May 2011. The International Water Resources Association and Global Water Intelligence also collaborated in organizing the event. In addition, the Euro-Arab Foundation for Higher Studies, the Caja Rural de Granada, the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation and the Andalusia Regional Ministry of Economy, Innovation and Science also provided support. It was attended by some 30 leading international experts from academia and the public and private sectors, and from institutions in many parts of the world. They were selected for their expertise and specially invited to participate in the meeting.

Following the workshop, the authors modified their papers based on the discussions at Granada and additional peer review. This special issue contains the papers that were discussed, as well as additional ones which the editors believed to complement them.

Michael Rouse and David Lloyd Owen address the complex issue of regulation in the industry. Dennis Wichelns covers how to enhance the performance of water prices and tariff structures to achieve socially desirable outcomes. David Zetland and Christopher

Gasson provide a comprehensive assessment of global water tariffs with a view toward making the systems sustainable, efficient and fair.

Gareth Walker provides a critique of the models available for predicting water demand within the context of England and Wales. Arnaud Reynaud assesses the impact of price and non-price policies on residential water demand in Wisconsin. Germà Bel, Francisco González-Gómez and Andrés J. Picazo-Tadeo consider the dynamics of privatization and regulation of water services by comparing experiences from two Spanish regions. Alberto Ruiz-Villaverde, Francisco González-Gómez and Andrés J. Picazo-Tadeo consider multi-criteria approach to analyzing public choice in urban water service management.

Roberto Martínez-Espiñeira and Maria A. García-Valiñas discuss “adopting versus adapting” in terms of adoption of water-saving technology versus water-conservation habits in Spain. María A. García-Valiñas and Josepa Miquel-Florensa discuss access and management of water service quality in Tanzania. Eduardo Araral and Yahua Wang discuss the water demand management situation in South-East Asia. Finally, Sonia Ferdous Hoque and Dennis Wichelns present a state-of-the-art review on urban water tariff structures to meet local challenges.

I am confident that the papers in this special issue will be of considerable interest to water professionals from different parts of the world and will contribute to the current ongoing global debates on these complex and evolving issues. The AguaGranada Foundation would like to thank all the authors and the co-sponsors of this stimulating event, as well as the editors of this publication.