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## UNISDR CALLS FOR CONSUMER CARE ON WORLD WATER DAY

**GENEVA, 22 March 2012** – The UN Secretary-General’s Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction, Margareta Wahlström, today urged people to think about how much water they will be responsible for using today on World Water Day.

Ms. Wahlström said: “We live in a world where clean, fresh drinking water is becoming increasingly scarce. It can take about 10 to 15 times more water to produce a kilo of meat than a kilo of wheat. By 2030 we will need at least 50% more food, 45% more energy and 30% more water.

“World Water Day should be a day of reflection on the challenges of sustainable development and what incremental steps each of us can take to make the world a less wasteful place when it comes to the use of a key natural resource like water whether it is eating less meat, drinking tap water, using less water to flush the toilet or taking a shower rather than a bath.

“There are 783 million people in the world today without access to safe water. Climate change is expected to exacerbate water stress in semi-arid regions across the globe and increased competition for water usually means less for the poor and the vulnerable. Water comes with lots of hidden costs and we need to make people more aware of what they are.”

### **About UNISDR**

UNISDR is the UN office dedicated to disaster risk reduction. It is led by the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction and supports implementation of the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters* which has been adopted by 168 countries and seeks “the substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries.” Over 130 countries now report on their disaster risk reduction efforts. The biennial Third Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction took place in May 2011 and was opened by the UN Secretary General. It attracted over 2,600 delegates representing 168 governments, 25 inter-governmental organizations, 65 NGOs and other ISDR partners. UNISDR has facilitated the creation of 38 National Disaster Data Bases around the world as part of its on-going global effort to lead and convince governments and the private sector to invest in risk reduction and avoid recurrent disaster losses which waste development resources. It has also mobilised over 1,000 cities and local governments to take part in the World Disaster Risk Reduction Campaign, *Making Cities Resilient: My City is Getting Ready!* In early 2011, UNISDR supported the initiative by the President of the UN General Assembly to organize the first thematic debate on disaster risk reduction ever held in the UN General Assembly.

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