



UN
2023 WATER
CONFERENCE

NEW YORK
22-24
MARCH
2023

A watershed moment for the SDGs

The UN 2023 Water Conference concluded on 24 March. It confirmed that water truly unites the world as a determined global community came together to make a difference not only for the future of water but for the future of the world.

A key outcome of the Conference, the Water Action Agenda has grown in both size and scope since the Conference opened. Commitments have been shared throughout both official sessions and side events, with several commitments mobilizing millions, and in a few cases billions, of dollars for water action.

The closing session of the Conference featured summaries from the five interactive dialogues which got to the heart not only of what water is, but what it can be: a driver of equality, a solution to the climate crisis, a facilitator of peace, and much, much more.



António Guterres, UN Secretary-General, and Csaba Kőrösi, President of the UN General Assembly, receive Water Action Agenda voluntary commitments. Credit: UN Photo

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres addressed his closing remarks to a packed room, thanking everyone for their commitment to #WaterAction. He noted: **“The commitments at this Conference will propel humanity towards the water-secure future every person on the planet need.”** He emphasized that water is for health, for peace, for sustainable development, and that’s why water needs to be at the centre of the global political agenda.

Addressing the closing Plenary, President of the General Assembly Csaba Kőrösi emphasized some of the gamechangers that can bring **“transformative action... leaving nobody behind”** such as integrated water and climate policy, Global water info system, early warnings for all, inclusive transboundary water agreements and more. He commended efforts that highlighted that the water cycle is a common good, an approach which will impact how water is governed. He also emphasized the importance of meaningful stakeholder engagement: **“Civil society and the private sector are at the heart of this transformation.”**

UN-Water chair and Director General of ILO Mr Gilbert F. Houngbo concluded: **“Water is and shall remain everyone’s business”**. He noted that the Conference demonstrated the importance of cooperation across sectors, stakeholders, and borders. With one example of this being Iraq acceding to the UN Water Convention during the Conference.

As the Closing Plenary, and Conference, concluded, the sentiment was one of a breakthrough response to the global water crisis. Governments, businesses and civil society committed billions of dollars to advance the water agenda, a dealmaker for accelerating sustainable development overall.





Water Action Agenda, be part of the action

The Water Action Agenda, the key outcome of the Conference, captured over 700 commitments by Friday evening. Commitments aimed at driving transformation from a global water crisis to a water-secure world. The agenda represents the global community's bold resolve to address the water challenges through a more coordinated and results-driven approach and it remains open for the registration of more commitments.

Member States

- The US announced a commitment of up to \$49 billion in investments to support climate resilient water and sanitation infrastructure and services.
- Japan will proactively contribute to the solution of water-related social issues faced by the Asia-Pacific region by developing “quality Infrastructure”, providing financial assistance worth approximately 500 billion yen (\$3.65 billion) over the next five years.
- Vietnam pledged to develop policies for major river basins management by 2025 and to ensure all households would have access to clean running water by 2030.
- Switzerland submitted 5 commitments to contribute to the UN's work, including in the areas of the Water Convention and transboundary cooperation. Switzerland is the cochair of the Interactive Dialogue on Water for Cooperation.
- The Niger Basin Authority (NBA) and the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) made a joint commitment of \$21.2 million in funding for a project that strengthens the Niger Basin Authority (NBA) and its member countries.
- The Government of Mozambique committed to taking all necessary steps to accelerate achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 by 2030 with investments of \$9.5 billion.
- With the Continental Africa Investment Programme (AIP), the African Union Commission aims to close Africa's water investments gap by mobilising at least US\$30 billion/year by 2030 through a range of initiatives, including the International High-Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa.



Water Action Agenda, be part of the action

Member States cont.

- By 2030, the EU aims to support the access of 70 million individuals to an improved drinking water source and/or sanitation facility. The EU will also support Member States with €20 million funding to accelerate the deployment of wastewater surveillance for COVID-19.
- More than 50 leading global companies unite to make collective commitment to SDG 6.

Multilateral Banks

- The Asian Development Bank commits to investing \$11 billion dollars in the water sector in the Asia-Pacific Region and \$100 billion to the water sector globally by 2030.

Private Sector

- Starbucks, Ecolab, Gap Inc., Reckitt and DuPont joined forces with U.S. Government to invest nearly \$140 million in Water Access Fund with the goal of reaching 5 million people with access to water, sanitation and hygiene.
- DANONE is launching a water acceleration blending fund to give daily safe water access to 30 million people in need.
- Xylem and 16 other companies commit \$11 billion dollars in Research and Development.
- World Benchmarking Alliance has pledged to assess 1,000 global companies across 22 industries on their impact towards achieving water-related goals every two years to help close the corporate accountability gap.

NGOs

- World Vision committed to raising and investing \$2 billion by 2030 to extend the impact of transformative water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services work across 50 countries in six regions. Note: All Water Action Agenda commitments are posted here.



Press Releases and Media Advisories

WATCH | [Press conference: The closing of the UN 2023 Water Conference >](#)

An overview of press releases and news stories during the Conference:

- **UN** | [Historic UN conference marks watershed moment to tackle global water crisis and ensure water-secure future](#)
- **UNECE** | [Iraq's accession to UN Water Convention opens new opportunities to strengthen transboundary water cooperation in the Middle East](#)
- **UN University** | [UN Water Experts: The World is Off-Track to Meet Its Sustainable Water Goal by 2030](#)
- **UN Global Compact** | [More than 50 leading global companies unite to make unprecedented collective commitment to SDG 6](#)
- **UN** | [Opening: UN calls for game-changing action to stem global water crisis](#)
- **UNECE** | [World must seize UN Water Conference to consolidate cooperation on shared waters as basis to address water crisis](#)
- **UN Global Compact** | [Starbucks, Ecolab, Gap Inc., Reckitt and DuPont Join with U.S. Government to Invest nearly \\$140 Million in Water Access Fund](#)
- **UNDP** | [UNDP at the UN Water Conference: Robust actions needed to manage, conserve, protect water and improve lives](#)

[Full list >](#)

FEATURE | [Origami Hummingbirds Make a Splash at UN Water Conference](#)

Web story - [English](#), [French](#), [Russian](#), [Spanish](#), [Hindi](#), [Japanese](#)

Video – [English](#)

FEATURE | [Running 200 marathons towards a global water solution](#)

Web story - [English](#), [French](#), [Russian](#), [Spanish](#), [Hindi](#)

Video - [English](#)



Daily summary of the Conference by ENB

The Earth Negotiations Bulletin followed the official proceedings of the UN 2023 Water Conference, sharing daily overviews and in-depth coverage along with photos that are free to use.

[Read their full Conference summary >](#)



Photo of the day



Csaba Kőrösi, President of the UN General Assembly, pressing the start button for a new chapter of transformation, leaving no one behind, supported by cheers and applause from delegates during Closing plenary.

Credit: UN Photo/Manuel Elías



Key information

Statements made during the plenary sessions are available on the [Conference website](#). The links to the webcast of the plenary sessions and the interactive dialogues are also available on the Conference website.