

2023 UN WATER CONFERENCE

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE 2:

Water for Sustainable Development:

Valuing Water, Water-Energy-Food Nexus, and Sustainable Economic and Urban Development

Co-chaired by the European Union and China

Co-Chair's conclusions

Interactive Dialogue 2 demonstrated a strong sense of urgency to manage water in a more sustainable way, and live in harmony with nature through a more circular, regenerative, resource efficient economic model. There is a lot to be learned in that regard from indigenous practices.

For this, some key objectives will need whole-of-government and whole-of-society follow-up and support:

- **Integrated water resources management** needs to be strengthened to address the whole hydrological cycle, and to achieve, by 2030, universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all. This means integrated planning and policy making across sectors with the necessary governance structures
- **Resource efficiency and reuse should become the norm for all economic sectors.** This includes, as a priority, improving agricultural water use efficiency, addressing sources of pollution, the reduction of industrial wastewater emissions, and water leakage and loss in urban areas. Adopting such approaches will help reduce the use of water and pollution from all sources.

- **All sectoral investment strategies must become water-smart**, especially regarding energy, backed by strategic environmental assessments and low-water footprint.
- Investments must be mobilized in water-smart technology and water-risk resilient infrastructures, backed by a **sustainable finance policy** (e.g. through taxonomies and disclosure rules) and **water pricing mechanisms with targeted social safeguards**. We should also redirect any existing harmful subsidies.
- **We must protect and restore the healthy life of ecosystems, including rivers, wetlands and lakes** that are essential for health, the successful mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, agriculture, safe drinking water and for reducing disaster risks. This is also **essential for the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework**. Nature-based solutions are indispensable to ensure a water resilient world, to retain and reuse water, and for the protection and restoration of water ecosystems.
- Finally, we need to address increasing water needs for **sustainable urban development** by:
 - Implementing integrated urban and territorial planning, with nature-based solutions such as green-blue infrastructures, and
 - Promoting communication technologies (ICTs)/smart city technologies
- The entire UN system, together with the voice of a Special Envoy for water, must work together to provide a platform for governments, international organizations, think tanks, civil society and other stakeholders to build synergies when addressing climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution and to reduce water-related disaster risks.