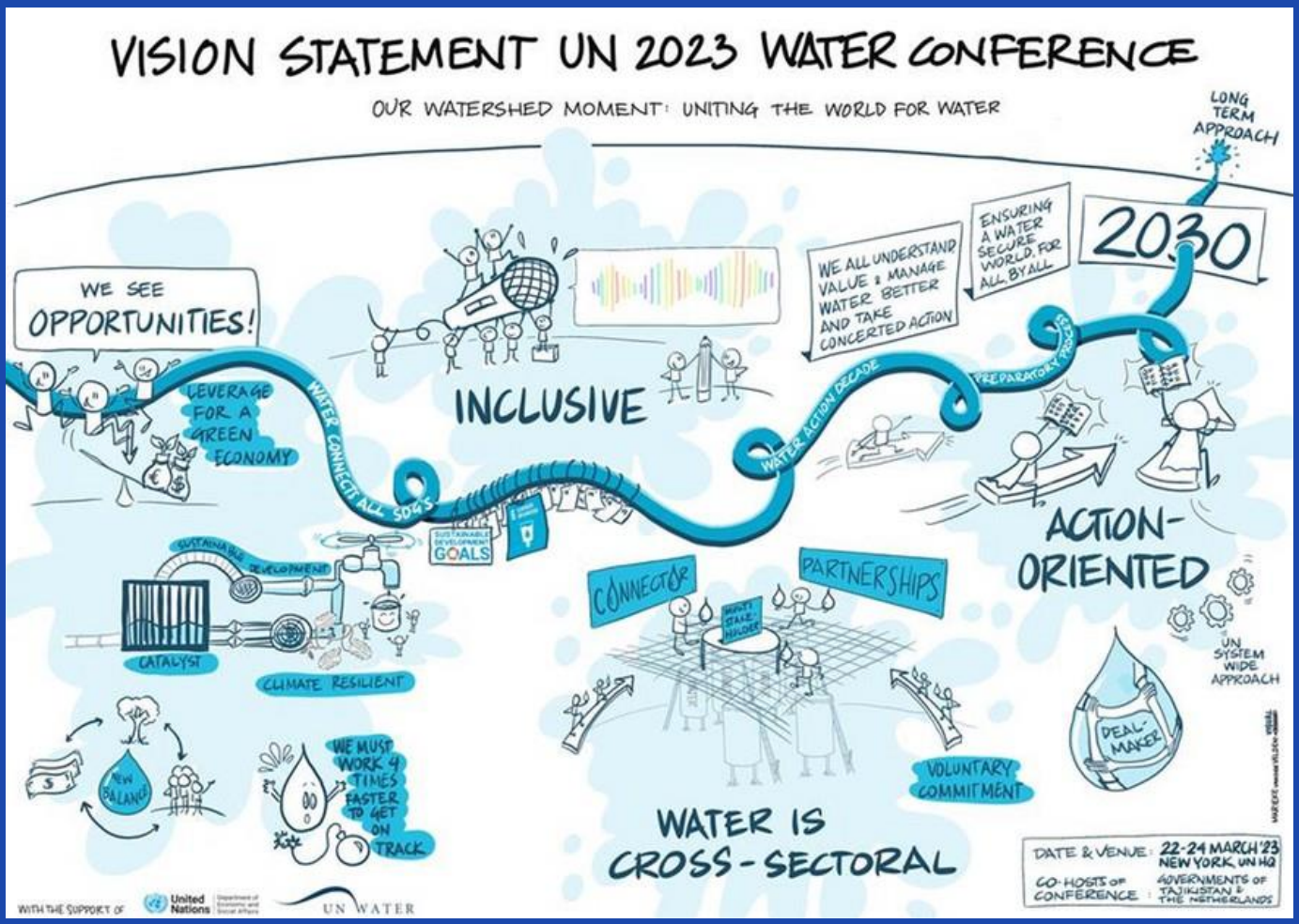
SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE MIDTERM COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR ACTION "WATER FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT", 2018–2028



The UN Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development" (UN Water Conference) was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 22 to 24 March 2023. This summary of proceedings is presented by President of the 77th session of the General Assembly, Csaba Kőrösi, in a*ccordance with General Assembly resolution 75/212.*

"As humanity's most precious global common good, water unites us all. That's why water needs to be at the centre of the global political agenda"

- United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres

"*Today's Conference should go down in history not only in terms of promoting the correct understanding of the challenges and problems but also in finding effective and efficient solutions."*

- H.E. Emomali Rahmon, President of Tajikistan

"*We won't rest until water is given the place it rightly deserves on global agendas and policy programmes […] We will create a fluid connection between water and the broader work of the United Nations up to 2030 and beyond."*

- King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The UN 2023 Water Conference was the largest-ever gathering of Members Statesand stakeholders to deliberate on water.

The Conference inspired thousands of stakeholders toorganize hundreds of side events at UN Headquarters, as well as during New York Water Week. Civil society, the private sector and scientists delivered a resounding message for a paradigm shift, working together for a sustainable and more socially balanced water future in an enabling, transformative environment. The Water Conference marked the starting point of a new narrative in sustainable development – one built on understanding, a revaluation of water, and the development of new water cooperation models.

Member State and stakeholder contributions to the Conference plenary debate and interactive dialogues led to a clear common understanding: "Keep calm and carry on" is not a viable option to resolve the global water crisis unfolding before our eyes. Transformational change is needed. Water must be understood, managed, valued and protected, for the benefit of all. Achieving these goals is the responsibility of all water users and governments, commensurate with their authority. Water is a critical lever for securing sustainable development across the social, economic, and environmental dimensions.

The key messages from the Conference are that the global water cycle is a global common good; the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation must be accessible to all populations without further delay, and rather than being a threat to life and health, water must become a catalyst for health and well-being, securing nutrition and energy for all.

At the start of the Conference, UN Secretary-General António Guterres encouraged the global community to respect, protect and share the water cycle, for the benefit of peopleand planet. The interactive dialogues echoed this call and proposed, inter alia, stronger multilateral cooperation on water at the UN in New York.

Member States called for improved, inclusive, and transparent water cooperation, across sectors and boundaries, addressing blue and green water alike. Interventions reflected the central role water plays within the sustainable development agenda and highlighted water as a key opportunity to achieve climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Financing was a central topic throughout the Conference. Developing countries need better access to financing. Unsustainable financing instruments and practices should be reconfigured to support people and the environment – now and in future.

As of 30 March 2023, more than 700 voluntary commitments have been summarized in the Water Action Agenda, which is key to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6 (clean water and sanitation) by 2030. Pledges made during the Conference have a direct financial implication exceeding $330 billion, with the potential to leverage close to $1 trillion worth of services for humanity and nature.

Most of the commitments outlined in the Water Action Agenda were made by civil society, reaffirming the central role that non-government actors need to play in both achieving SDG 6 and transforming our planet into a water secure home for humanity.

Cooperative and inclusive action through multistakeholder coalitions was emphasized, galvanizing local communities, indigenous peoples, civil society organizations and governments at local and national levels, as well as international organizations.

Innovative, affordable local solutions offer the best chance to solve water problems. Local, national, and regional policies that integrate water and related issues can provide the enabling environment needed to leverage positive externalities and strengthen multilateral cooperation for a sustainable and peaceful world.

Water waste and pollution are dangerous to human well-being. Water disasters pose a threat to lives and livelihoods. Mitigating flood and drought impacts is crucial for water security[1]. Mid- and long-term sustainability requires smart solutions for storing water in green and grey infrastructure to balance water demand and supply at reasonable economic, ecologic, and social costs.

The lives of marginalized and disadvantaged populations today, as well as future generations, depend on the agreement and implementation of game changers to transform our understanding and socioeconomic cultures, attitudes, andpractices. The global water crisis can be addressed. A water secure world is possible,
if game changers emanating from the Conference are implemented.

"The outcome of this Conference is not a legally binding document, but it still turns the page of history," said President Kőrösi on 24 March 2023.

In his remarks, the President of Tajikistan stated that the objectives of the Water Action Decade are just as necessary today as they were five years ago and should continue to guide us all for the next five years. Through the gamechangers identified below, this Conference can accelerate major new initiatives to supercharge global efforts to achieve these objectives.

Faster progress can be made by forging new inclusive partnerships, securing new financing and holistically implementing the new Water Action Agenda. Based on the outcome of the five interactive dialogues, the President of the General Assembly highlighted nine decisive game changers at the closure of the Conference:

[1] "The capacity of a population to safeguard access to adequate quantities of water of an acceptable quality for sustaining human and ecosystem health on a watershed basis, and to ensure efficient protection of life and property against water-related hazards such as floods, landslides, land subsidence, and droughts" - Intergovernmental definition of water security as adopted by Member States in Paris in the context of the 8th phase of the International Hydrological Programme

Integrated water and climate policy at national and global levels by 2030.

The scaffolding for integrated policy frameworks to support water management will be necessary for achieving climate change mitigation and adaptation. By integrating urban and rural policies and planning, we can better address issues related to a rapidly urbanizing world.

Benefit: Integrated policies will increase systemic resilience to shocks and changes.

Operational Global Water Information System to support water, climate and land management for socioeconomic resilience, ecological sustainability and social inclusion by 2030.

Decisions driven by data and information reinforce accountability, cooperation and stakeholder by-in. More accurate data and valuation of water-related climate-induced loss and damage will only support adaptation actions and resilience.

Benefit: The Global Water Information System supports improved water and land management, climate resilience, early warning, and risk-informed decision-making for climate action and disaster risk reduction.

Early Warnings for All to help safeguard lives and property by 2027.

Improved early warnings are a crucial tool to help avoid the negative impacts of exposure to severe weather, climate, and water risks.

Benefit: The Early Warnings for All initiative will reduce the social and financial impacts of natural hazards and make the world a safer place for all people, regardless of their vulnerabilities.

Overcoming the dependence on ever-rising water consumption for providing nutrition and power – as fast as possible.

Decoupling water consumption and economic activity is a prerequisite for water sustainability and climate resilience. Alternative, climate-smart food sources contribute to sustainability. The adaptation of global agriculture to enhance supply chain efficiency and empower small communities must be a priority, starting with Africa.

Benefit: Addressing the dependency of food and energy security on water consumption will contribute to greater resilience to shocks of all kinds, as well as to reduce pressure on ecosystems and societies.

Re-defined financial principles to make our economies water-, climate-, land-, and ecosystems- smart and people centric.

Valuing water accurately is a precondition for achieving sustainable and inclusive development. Pricing water closer to its true value is therefore critical to radically improving the efficiency of water use and to achieving equity. Pricing and appropriately targeting subsidies for poor and vulnerable communities will help reduce social pressures. The broader evolution of multilateral financial institutions, especially the World Bank and multilateral developmentbanks (MDBs), can lead to improved mobilization of capital for water action and better long-term resilience support to Member States.

Public and private finances must be coordinated to lower the cost of capital for investments in the developing world. All sectoral investment strategies must be water-smarter, while circular solutions – especially those related to energy – must be backed by strategic environmental assessments and lower water footprints. Water resource efficiency and reuse should become the norm for all economic sectors.

Benefit: A new water economy as a foundational element for redefining business culture, development cooperation and a more peaceful world.

Global Water Education Network to build the capacity of institutions and people, especially to support developing countries.

A Global Water Education Network provides experts and institutions with the capacity to manage water sustainably and integrate water, food and energy considerations into local, national and regional management and cooperative schemes.

Benefit: Governments and citizens would benefit from enhanced awareness, better preparedness, and timely information-sharing. Sharing lessons and good practices will catalyse understanding and cooperation.

Inclusive, comprehensive transboundary agreements to support countries, on the basis of the 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) and the 1997 Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses (Watercourses Convention).

Transboundary agreements can support a culture of cooperation and trust, allowing for the leveraging and sharing of benefits that are not accessible at national scales. Disaster risk reduction also greatly benefits from transboundary cooperation. The development and adoption of national mechanisms for cross-sectoral coordination and mutually agreed, mutually beneficial, no harm-basedpolicies for cooperative water-related adaptation also supports regional and global water security.

Benefit: Expanding the scope and membership of existing water conventions can result in more inclusive and integrated cooperation on water and resilience issues.

Institutional architecture to support transformation: a board of UN agencies under the leadership of the UN Secretary-General, managed by a UN Special Envoy for Water, supported by a reformed UN-Water coordinating body and an independent scientificand advisory panel, in addition to the arrangement for discussing water policy at the United Nations in New York to be developed by the General Assembly.

Member States can transition to a water-secure world by discussing and agreeing on integrated policy and programming, supported by a committee on water that reports to the General Assembly.

A UN Special Envoy for Water can ensure that water remains high on the political agenda, within and outside the UN. The Special Envoy can work with a revised and empowered UN-Water platform to strengthen upstream coordination within the UN system and swiftly deliver UN programmes at the country level.

Benefit: Revised UN capacity to support the international community in better coordinated and more effective delivery of services to country and local levels. Mandated mechanism for UN Members to deliberate on water policy and strategy in New York.

Intergovernmental processes on water to be convened on a regular basis.

Member States must be able to discuss water matters of global concern on a regular basis. Currently, there is no platform to do so. Regular global meetings will sustain the momentum of water-related actions and ensure accountability for progress catalysed by the UN Water Conference. The first follow-up intergovernmental event may be convened within three years. In line with this goal, and consistent with the themes of the interactive dialogues of the Conference, future UN processes on health, energy, food, economic development, urban development, climate, environment, biodiversity, disaster risk reduction and international cooperation should all feature water on their agendas. The General Assembly can agree on the details of this game changer.

Benefit: More effective accounting on transformation and inclusion through governments, international organizations, think tanks, civil society, and other stakeholders.

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

22-24 March 2023, UN Headquarters, New York

Pursuant to the General Assembly resolution 73/226, the United Nations Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018–2028, also known as the UN 2023 Water Conference, was held in New York, from 22 to 24 March 2023, co-hosted by the Republic of Tajikistan and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The aim of the meeting was to assess progress made in the implementation of the International Decade objectives, while reaffirming the internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It also aimed to identify obstacles, opportunities, and innovative ways and means to support their implementation; foster an exchange of views and develop actions and initiatives needed for accelerating progress towards the achievement of the objectives during the second half of the International Decade; and to share ongoing efforts, best practices and experiences gained.

The Conference featured an opening and closing ceremony, six plenary meetings and five interactive dialogues. Participants included Member States of the United Nations, members of the United Nations specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations and other entities participating as observers in the sessions and work of the General Assembly; relevant intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions and international bodies that were accredited to the World Summit on Sustainable Development; associate members of the regional commissions[1]; specialized agencies and related organizations; other intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and international bodies; interested United Nations organs; accredited non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions, as well as members of the scientific community, private sector and philanthropic organizations. Of the 2,667 registered participants, there were eight Heads of State, three Vice Presidents, three Heads of Government, six Deputy Prime Ministers, some 120 ministers and 17 heads of IGOs and specialized agencies.

Over the course of three days, speakers highlighted the need to urgently scale up action to address the global water crisis and drive transformation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Key messages emanating from the plenaries and the interactive dialogues are summarized below.

[1] American Samoa, Anguilla, Aruba, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Curaçao, French Polynesia, Guam, Montserrat, New Caledonia, Puerto Rico, Sint Maarten, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands

Opening Plenary

In the Opening Plenary, the two Presidents of the Conference (Tajikistan and the Netherlands) and the two Ex-Officios were elected. Bangladesh, Belize, Burundi, Colombia, Chile, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iceland, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, and Saudi Arabia were elected Vice-Presidents by acclamation, and Colombia, the Rapporteur General. In his statement, the President of Tajikistan proposed to organize the next UN Water Conference in his country at the end of Water Action Decade in 2028 to monitor the implementation of the commitments of the Water Action Agenda; and to develop and implement a national, regional and international programme for the effective use of all water resources, consistent with the commitments of the global climate agenda. The King of the Netherlands alluded to the water challenges and underscored the role of the younger generation and their willingness for solutions.

The UN Secretary-General referred to water as humanity's lifeblood, a human right, and delineated four key areas to accelerate results: closing the water management gap; investing in water and sanitation systems; focusing on resilience; and addressing climate change. He called for game-changing commitments to bring the Water Action Agenda to life. The President of the General Assembly encouraged participants to acknowledge water as a global common good and recommended that solutions address water crisis in an integrated manner. He emphasized that a cooperative water-secure future starts with political will, economic intelligence and cultural acceptance. The President of the Economic and Social Council described the benefits of leveraging water to achieve the sustainable development agenda through the inclusion of marginalized groups in decisions about water, and through water education, financing, and continuous advocacy. The Secretary General of the Conference (Under Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) focused on the role of multilateralism in ensuring the human right to water and referred to data and information as key to sustainable water management. He also noted that a closer examination of the water-energy-food nexus was critical.

The opening statements were followed by consideration of organizational and procedural matters, including the adoption of the rules of procedure; adoption of the agenda; election of officers other than the Presidents; organization of work; appointment of the Co-Chairs of the interactive dialogues; and appointment of members of the Credentials Committee.

Plenary Meetings

In the six plenaries of the UN Water Conference, 198 speakers delivered statements, including 166 Member States, 20 intergovernmental organizations and UN system entities and 12 stakeholders. All speakers emphasized the importance of the UN Water Conference taking place almost five decades after Mar de Plata, Argentina.

While several cross-cutting themes were discussed during the three days of plenary debate, the following is a summary of the critical challenges and key messages raised.

Critical Challenges

World leaders, IGOs and stakeholders expressed their concerns about the global water crisis. At the midpoint of the 2030 Agenda and the Water Action Decade, the world is far from reaching SDG 6. Based on current progress, it is unlikely that the targets will be met by 2030.

Participants reaffirmed the need to implement the human rights to water and sanitation. Several stated that water is a global public good. Universal access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) was underscored as a top national priority by a vast majority of the speakers, although many admitted that billions are still deprived of this fundamental right. Providing adequate supply of water was described as a 'health need' with many citing that the lack of access to WASH as the primary cause of mortality worldwide. The Covid-19 pandemic had exacerbated existing inequalities, highlighting the importance of water services, especially for those in need.

The disproportionate impact on marginalized populations (indigenous peoples, women, children, rural populations, persons with disabilities, migrants, and displaced persons, among others) was often stressed, along with the urgency of prioritizing and providing space for them to have a decision-making role. Few even warned that the far-reaching consequences of the water crisis included discrimination and legal barriers, which could increase the risk of sexual violence and other dangers. Viewing water issues through a strong gender-based lens was recommended. It was also pointed out that access to water is firmly linked to cultural rights and religious traditions.

Most speakers identified lack of funding as one of the biggest challenges to achieving the water-related goals and targets of the Water Action Decade. The adverse effects of climate change on water quantity and quality, pollution, and salt intrusion due to sea-level rise were issues raised by many speakers during the plenaries. The contribution of natural disasters to water scarcity and contamination, especially in Small Island Developing States and landlocked countries, was underlined. The variability of water resources over space and time was also listed as a major concern.

Population growth, rapid urbanization and migration flows leading to water shortages were also identified as challenges. Some delegations referred to water scarcity as a source of conflicts, while others pointed to existing conflicts, geopolitical crises, and the use of sanctions as major hurdles to achieving SDG 6.

Key Messages

There was a resounding call to appoint a UN Special Envoy for Water, who would mobilize decisive actions aimed at meeting global water challenges. Some advocated this as an important step towards better coherence of water efforts, and argued that it would improve coordination among various agencies and bodies currently dealing with water issues. Others said that it would ensure that water remained a priority on the political agenda. There were offers to contribute towards this proposed office as well. One delegation, while supporting the call, cautioned that the Water Envoy should be impartial and not mediate in transboundary conflicts. Few asserted that the post should be occupied by an official from the African continent.

Transboundary water cooperation was a recurring theme throughout the plenary meetings. There was widespread support for enhanced regional and international water cooperation. References were made to the Transboundary Water Cooperation Coalition. Several leaders encouraged cooperation over cross-border and transboundary surface and groundwater to promote sustainable economic development, human and environmental health, biodiversity, climate action and resilience, disaster risk reduction and peace. Some advised on regional and basin-wide cooperation. The importance of fostering intergovernmental agreements on transboundary water management was also raised, with calls to join and implement the two United Nations Water Conventions: the 1992 "Water Convention" and the 1997 "Watercourses Convention". A proposal for the creation of a financial fund for transboundary river basins was mentioned. Successful examples and best practices were showcased.

While most States spotlighted national efforts, there was a widespread call for scaling up investments and finance in the water sector. Some asked for investments to be restructured and redirected towards innovative alternatives; others proposed the creation of a financing mechanism to encourage greater private investment and structures that would enable developed countries to provide financial and technical assistance. International financial institutions were asked to continue their efforts in mobilizing finance, especially for developing countries.

Several leaders and ministers spotlighted the need for accelerating investments in water-distribution infrastructure; the rehabilitation of aging water systems; watershed management and related technology, including water storage, rainwater harvesting, recycling, wastewater treatment, and coastal protection management, among others. Many development partner countries announced wider investments, both for water infrastructure as well as for access to safer water, sanitation and hygiene services[2]. There was a broad call for capacity-building, technology transfer, water innovation and the sharing of knowledge.

Another major theme that reverberated during the plenary meetings was the interconnection of climate and water. Delegations pointed to the adverse impact of climate change on the water cycle, which negatively affected groundwater quantity, the volume of water flowing to rivers and aquifers, and the provision of water services. They recalled the devastating consequences of climate-induced water disasters. In this regard, they reaffirmed their commitments to advance adaptability measures and sustainable resilience, and invest in emergency preparedness and climate-smart agriculture. Implementing early warning systems and automated observation systems was recommended to ensure resilience to hazardous hydrometeorological events. Some delegations called for a response to the Secretary-General's appeal for "Early Warnings For All". Others proposed a reinforced integration of climate and water policies, and still others called for the breaking down of policy silos.

There was a general appeal for a follow-up to the UN Water Conference, with some suggesting a permanent intergovernmental water mechanism or a dedicated UN agency to address water issues. Some speakers made the case for a robust water governance architecture and others for a stronger role of the UN-Water coordinating body.

[2] Details of the commitments made are available at https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/action-networks/water

Some suggested regular, high-level intergovernmental United Nations meetings on water, not only to maintain the momentum of the Water Conference and stock-take, but also to drive its follow-up process, along with more efficient UN and donor coordination. Some enlisted upcoming events on the water calendar, such as the World Water Forum and the next UN Water Conference at the end of the Water Action Decade in 2028.

The general debate also underlined the importance of data and information for analysis, planning and implementation. While several delegations focused on their own national databases, there were also proposals for a network of water monitoring systems, the strengthening of data management, the collection of data-points on atmosphere and hydro- geographics, and the creation of regional data hubs. Participants made a strong case forcooperation on early warning and hydrological observation systems to ensure better information exchange and thus avoid catastrophes.

Science-based policies, innovation and information systems were reiterated as important for strengthening the water sector and allowing for informed decision-making. Delegates called upon UN entities to play a larger role in providing platforms for governments, NGOs, and civil societies to foster information exchange and address collective water-related disasters with environmental and economic dimensions. The facilitation of global observation networks to monitor and predict water resources and threats was mentioned. There were proposals for the creation of water roadmaps to support drought management and a global platform to monitor water scarcity.

Desalination was highlighted by several delegations as means to address water scarcity, while one Member State called for an assessment of its economic cost and environmental impacts.

Many delegations emphasized that water was inextricably linked to the three pillars of sustainable development, with many pointing to its role in promoting steady employment, eliminating poverty, and fostering economic growth.

The interconnectivity of water, climate change and food production was reviewed during the plenary meetings, with an emphasis on the water-food-energy nexus. Many delegations urged a focus on synergies to advance Goal 6, and called for prioritizing water when discussing climate, food systems, and energy, as well as industrial processes. Delegations supported the holistic and integrated management of water.

Community participation and partnerships between the public and private sector, civil society, and other interested parties was a cross-cutting theme. Adopting a circular water economy approach was also promoted by many participants, who considered the water cycle as one connected system that created links between the various elements. Education on responsible water use was advised as a measure aimed at addressing the growing strain on water resources. Member States also asserted the importance of shifting to green and blue economies, with a focus on wetlands, rivers, and lakes. Some participants pointed to the gains derived from nature-based solutions. One Member State proposed sustained behavioral change to ensure greater coherence in water management. Another emphasized the importance of art, design, andculture in creating a positive difference. The modernization and reform of the water service sector was also pitched as a priority.

A stakeholder representative expressed hopes that water consumption by industrial and agricultural parties would be radically reduced and that water bodies would be given legal rights; another warned world leaders to act against 'forever chemicals' – PFAS that contaminated water.

Interactive Dialogues

The UN Water Conference featured five interactive dialogues held in parallel with the plenary meetings, in accordance with resolution 75/212. The interactive dialogues were collaborative and multistakeholder in nature. Each interactive dialogue was presided over by two co-chairs, one from a developing country and one from a developed country[3], appointed by the Presidents of the Conference. Each interactive dialogue featured a panel of experts who engaged with Member States and other relevant stakeholders. Following is a summary of the key conclusions of the interactive dialogues.

Interactive Dialogue 1: "Water for Health: Access to WASH, including the Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation"

The first interactive dialogue took place on the afternoon of 22 March 2023, co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Miguel Ceara Hatton, Minister for Environment and Natural Resources of the Dominican Republic and Rt. Hon. Lord Zac Goldsmith, Minister for Overseas Territories, Commonwealth, Energy, Climate and Environment at the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office of the United Kingdom. The co-chairs stressed that even though some accomplishments were registered in the context of achieving of water, hygiene, and sanitation (WASH) for all, there were still many challenges for the implementation of the SDG6, owing to factors such as the Covid-19 pandemic, Ukraine crisis, water scarcity, inefficient use of water, and deep social inequality, among others. Since climate change was increasing water insecurity, donors, civil society and the private sector were encouraged to throw their weight behind Government leadership.

Panelists included Hon. Abida Sidik Mia, Minister for Water and Sanitation of Malawi; Mr. Filipo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); Mr. Vikas Sheel, Assistant Vice-Minister, Ministry of Jal Shakti (Water Resources) of India; and Mr. Jagan Chapagain, Secretary-General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). The lead discussants were Ms. Boluwatito Awe, President of the Nigerian Youth Parliament for Water; Ms. Maria Neira, Assistant Director General, World Health Organization (WHO); Ms. Andrea Carmen, Executive Director, International Indian Treaty Council; Ms. Eva Muhia, Deputy President, Pan-African Association of Sanitation Actors; and H.E. Ms. Laura Chinchilla, Former President of Costa Rica and Sanitation and Water for All Global Leader. The discussion was moderated by Ms. Catherine Russell, Executive Director, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Thirty-one participants made interventions during the interactive debate.

The common theme raised by participants related to the human right to water. There was a broad recognition that water and sanitation were human rights, and access to WASH services was essential for health, education, gender equality and development. Participants emphasized the need to promote water as a common good. Importance of partnerships and innovation was also brought up by many. All the participants reinforced the message that the WASH sector urgently needed to adapt and evolve around three pillars – political leadership, government systems and smart financing - to achieve the ambition of the SDGs and reach everyone, everywhere, with sustainable, climate-resilient WASH services.

[3] Interactive Dialogue 1 : Dominican Republic and United Kingdom
Interactive Dialogue 2: China and European Union Interactive Dialogue 4 : Senegal and Switzerland
Interactive Dialogue 3 : Egypt and Japan Interactive Dialogue 5 : Singapore and United States

Key messages emerging from the interactive dialogue were:

- Government leadership and willingness to drive change is key. Political will is essential to accelerate transformative change. Development partners are ready to collaborate, joining with other stakeholders in support of government leadership and systems, working across sectors.
- Funding and financing from the public sector, private sector and donors must increase dramatically. Governments must develop policy to guide funding and financing decisions and strategies; attracting and making best use of funding and finance.
- Governments and development partners see the need to develop a capable and motivated WASH sector workforce, investing in people and institutions.
- Data and evidence are key to progress, and must reflect the needs of all people, including the marginalized. Data must drive decision-making and be used to reinforce accountability.
- Governments and partners need to encourage WASH innovation and experimentation.

Interactive Dialogue 2: Water for Sustainable Development: Valuing Water, Water-Energy-Food Nexus and Sustainable Economic and Urban Development

The second interactive dialogue took place on the afternoon of 22 March 2023, co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Li Guoying, Minister for Water Resources of People's Republic of China and H.E. Ms. Dubravka Šuica, European Commission Vice-President for Democracy and Demography of the European Union. The co-chairs underscored that water was an undeniable catalyst for sustainable development, connecting all SDGs — from agriculture to technology to general production and consumption system. Describing water as a strategic economic resource, participants were urged to foster stronger multilateral exchanges and promote water governance through systemic formulation and alignment of water policies.

The Interactive Dialogue featured two 'subpanels': subpanel one was themed "Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystem nexus" with H.E. Mr. AK Abdul Momen, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh; and Mr. Tālis Juhna, Vice-Rector for Research and Professor, Riga Technical University, as the panelists. Ms. Dinara Ziganshina, Director of the Scientific Information Center of Interstate Commission for Water Coordination in Central Asia; and Mr. Yong-deok Cho, Secretary-General at Asia Water Council served as the lead discussants. Subpanel two themed "Sustainable economic and urban development, Valuing water", included presentations by H.E. Mr. Nizar Baraka, Minister of Equipment and Water of Morocco and Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Under Secretary-General and Executive Director of the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat); with Ms. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and Mr. Abou Amani, Director for Water Sciences, Secretary of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme, UNESCO as lead discussants. There were 23 interventions made.

The dialogue demonstrated a strong sense of urgency to work towards more sustainable management of water, through a circular, regenerative, resource efficient economic model. Participants called for an integrated approach to water management with a focus on water- energy-food nexus. They further highlighted the need to invest in technology and innovative solutions; as well as learn from indigenous practices. A whole-of-government and whole-of- society follow-up and support was recommended.

Key messages emerging from the interactive dialogue were:

- Strengthening integrated water resources management to address the whole hydrological cycle, and to achieve, by 2030, the universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.

- Making resource efficiency and reuse the norm for all economic sectors, including improving agricultural water use efficiency, addressing sources of pollution, reduction of industrial waste water emissions, and water leakage and loss in urban areas.
- Devising water-smart sectoral investment strategies, especially regarding energy, backed by strategic environmental assessments and low-water footprint.
- Mobilizing investments 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. Redirecting any existing harmful subsidies.
- Protecting and restoring healthy ecosystems – including rivers, wetlands and lakes that are essential for health, for successful mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, for agriculture, for safe drinking water and for reducing disaster risks.
- Addressing increasing water needs for sustainable urban development by:
  - Implementing integrated urban and territorial planning, with nature-based solutionssuch as green-blue infrastructures;
  - Promoting communication technologies (ICTs)/smart city technologies
- The entire UN system, together with the 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.

Interactive Dialogue 3: Water for Climate, Resilience and Environment: Source to Sea, Biodiversity, Climate, Resilience and DRR

The third interactive dialogue took place on the afternoon of 23 March 2023, co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Hani Sewilam, Minister for Water Resources and Irrigation of Egypt, and H.E. Ms. Yoko Kamikawa, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Japan. The co-chairs highlighted the intrinsic link between climate change and water, advocating a holistic response to ensure the best use of available resources. They underlined the importance of scientific data and an open, integrated global platform for data collection and assessment. The opening also featured H.E. Mr. János Áder, former President of Hungary, who is a member of the Water and Climate Leaders, and a former member of the High-Level Panel on Water. He noted that 80 per cent of the impacts of climate change were experienced through water, including droughts and flash floods. He also discussed the need for better access to funding, especially in Africa.

The interactive dialogue was divided into three different thematic areas of discussion: "Changing Climate: Water scarcity, droughts, and the melting cryosphere"; "Resilience to water disasters: Decreasing risk and conserving biodiversity" and "Working for the future: Early warning from source to sea". The panelists for the first sub-theme were H.E. Mr. Senzo Mchunu, Minister for Water and Sanitation of South Africa; and H.E. Mrs. Mariam Almheiri, Minister for Climate Change and Environment of the United Arab Emirates. H.E. Mr. Christophe Béchu, Minister for Ecological Transition and Territorial Cohesion of France; Ms. Mami Mizutori, Head of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and Mr. Bruno Oberle, Director- General of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) were the panelists for the second thematic discussion. The third discussion had Mr. Petteri Taalas, Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and Ms. Leticia Tituana, youth representative from Future Rising Fellows as the panelists. Mr. David Cooper, Acting Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, moderated the discussions. Thirty-four interventions were made.

Participants focused on the nexus between water, climate change and disaster, and discouraged working in silos on these issues. They highlighted the need for scientifically proven data, coordination, and collaboration in all areas related to environment. The participants called for commitment, actions, and coalitions to meet water challenges towards full-achievement of water-related goals and targets.

Key messages emerging from the interactive dialogue were:

- Adopt an "Inter-COP" process to connect, integrate, and fully implement water-relateddecisions made at global assemblies, conventions, and within frameworks dedicated toclimate, resilience, and the environment, building on COP27 which brought water discussions to the centre of the climate discourse. COP28 is the chance to further agreement on integrated water and biodiversity action as well as more innovation and better access to finance for resilience and adaptation.
- Water is not only a problem but also part of solutions that allow marine, terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems to provide services for climate action, both for mitigation and adaptation.
- Establish a Global Water Information System, based on the "Hydrological Status and Outlook system (HydroSOS)" and water reporting, as a prerequisite for improved water management, climate resilience, early warning, and risk-informed decision-making for climate action and disaster risk reduction. This should be among the top priorities of water-related climate action and supported by the Water Cycle Integrator (WCI).
- Climate-resilient water management requires internal defragmentation and external integration of current water management systems. This can be achieved by 1)Mainstreaming integrated policy frameworks which combine integrated water resources management (IWRM) with other holistic water-related approaches that link the interconnected ecosystems of the hydrological cycle with the associated socioeconomic processes. 2) Developing and adopting national mechanisms for cross-sectoral coordination and mutually agreed policies for cooperative water-related adaptation.
- Consider the creation of Contextualized Environmental Economic Accounting Systems to support investment directed to water-related climate and environmental resilience-building and providing an accurate assessment of water-related climate-induced loss and damage.
- Follow a Water Action Workflow encompassing six steps: risk awareness, risk identification, designing of counter measures, funding, multi-stakeholder participation, and on-site implementation.
- Focus on whole-of-the-system approach. River basin is the primary solution scale, not only to resolve water demand and supply issues but also to address water quality problems.
- Resilient water infrastructure system is strengthened by enhancing multiple functions.
- Nature-based solutions and green-grey infrastructure approaches can provide important contributions and co-benefits for climate, biodiversity and disaster risk reduction.
- Taking into account the close links between resilience, biodiversity, and the status of water-related ecosystems, holistic conservation approaches are required to implement coherent policies, linking biodiversity conservation and climate-resilient water management.
- Climate resilient water management is a fundamental part of adaptation and mitigation of climate change.

- Decoupling water consumption from economic development is crucial for sustainable development.
- In order to build resilience, it is essential to mainstream integrated policy frameworks that combine integrated water resources management (IWRM) with other holistic approaches that link the interconnected ecosystems of the hydrological cycle with the associated socioeconomic processes. Such holistic approaches include source to sea, inclusive transboundary governance, integrated coastal zone management, and disaster risk management
- To secure successful and swift implementation of transformative commitments in the Water Action Agenda, the Office of the PGA was encouraged to work with Member States to propose a UN water platform for discussing policy and preparing joint programming ahead of the SDG Summit.

Interactive Dialogue 4: Water for Cooperation: Transboundary and International Water Cooperation, Cross Sectoral Cooperation, including Scientific Cooperation, and Water Across the 2030 Agenda

The fourth interactive dialogue took place on the afternoon of 23 March 2023, co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Serigne Mbaye Thiam, Minister of Water and Sanitation of Senegal and H.E. Mr. Christian Frutiger, State Secretary, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of the Swiss Confederation. The co-chairs pointed out the paradox of water, which was scarce and abundant at the same time, as well as rare and irreplaceable, while highlighting the risk of increasing conflicts and competition over access to water in the future. In this situation, the centrality of cooperation in realizing SDG6, the important role of hydro diplomacy and good governance of the 'blue gold' as a factor of peace, were underlined. The co-chairs called attention to the important role of multi- stakeholder partners, the integration of civil society and the private sector as well as the necessity for ensuring innovative financing.

In the form of two thematic debates on "Promoting water cooperation and sharing benefits from transboundary water management" and on the question of "Can cross sectoral collaborations solve the water crisis?", presentations were made by H.E. Mr. Tran Hong Ha, Deputy Prime Minister of Vietnam, Mr. Hassan Nasir Jamy, Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources of Pakistan; Mr. Ahmet Mete SAATÇİ, Emeritus Professor, Member of the Board of Governors of World Water Council 2019-2022 of Türkiye; and Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary of UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). H.E. Mr. Norbert Totschnig, Federal Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management of the Republic of Austria;
H.E. Mr. Danilo Türk, Lead Political Advisor - Geneva Water Hub, President of Club de Madrid, and Former President of Slovenia were the lead discussants for the Dialogue, along with Ms. Maria Gwynn, from the Institute for Public International Law at the University of Bonn, Governing Council Member Itaipú Binacional; and Mr. Daouda Samba Sow, Secretary General of Gambia River Basin Development Organization (OMVG). Ms. Rola Dashti, Executive Secretary of UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN ESCWA), served as moderator. Twenty-one participants made interventions during the Dialogue.

Participants emphasized water's role as a connecting factor and a common demonstrator for development, stressing the need for a legal framework for river basins with the central role of the UN. They underscored that the lack of cooperation on transboundary waters hindered achievement of other SDGs, with many recognizing the value of the two UN water conventions (Watercourse Convention, Water Convention). Several shared their experiences and success stories, where advancing cooperation with their neighbors had allowed them to maximizeshared benefits. Many recognized the link between water and conflict potential and observed how water could be a leverage for peace.

Key messages emerging from the interactive dialogue were:

- Water has the capacity to unite and act as a driver of peace, sustainable development, climate action and regional integration. Water diplomacy is a key enabler for peace and water security. Even in times of severe water scarcity, cooperation on surface waters and groundwaters has been a game changer; and countries have demonstrated an ability to collaborate based on international water law principles in order to find and implement mutually beneficial solutions.
- Transboundary water cooperation needs to be accelerated greatly to meet SDG 6 and other SDGs. We are not on track to meet SDG target 6.5. Only 24 countries have all their transboundary waters covered by operational arrangements.
- Transboundary waters face significant and increasing pressures as a result of population increase, growing water demands, ecosystem degradation and climate change. Legal and institutional arrangements need to be established or enhanced to deal with growing competition over shared resources and prevent conflict.
- River, lake and aquifer basin organizations are veritable agents of peace and need to be strengthened or be set up where they are lacking. The role of River Basin Organizations (RBOs) should be bolstered while supporting their efforts. Cooperation needs to be strengthened, including transboundary aquifers, through capacity building initiatives.
- Cooperation on groundwaters is especially lagging behind. Given the importance of groundwater to tackle growing water scarcity and sustain biodiversity, establishing cooperation mechanisms or expanding existing ones to groundwater is crucial.
- Benefit-sharing is an important incentive and success factor of water cooperation. Cooperative solutions should build on the multiple economic, social, environmental and political benefits offered by water cooperation.
- Science, data and knowledge exchange are essential to underpin cooperation. More investments in knowledge base and scientific cooperation are needed.
- Countries can learn from the experience of others while adapting cooperation arrangements to their basin-specific situation.
- Transboundary and cross sectoral water cooperation needs to be better financed by improved coordination of existing resources and mobilizing additional ones, including innovative financing models such as blended finance, as well as through the development of common master plans at the basin level.
- The UN global water conventions - the 1992 Water Convention and the 1997 Watercourses Convention, are essential tools for supporting cooperation based on the fundamental principles of customary international law. Recent and upcoming accessions to the Water Convention demonstrate strengthened political will to cooperate. More countries should accede to and implement the UN water conventions.
- Advancing water cooperation and water diplomacy requires increasing capacity, at all levels, including for negotiating new agreements and addressing the complexity and interrelation of water and other sectoral issues in order to enhance climate resilience.
- Water cooperation can take multiple forms and requires multi-stakeholder involvement, including civil society, concerned populations, local communities, private sector, women and youth.
- Water cooperation should also involve water-related sectors such as energy, agriculture, health, environment.
- Water should be prioritized in bilateral and multilateral cooperation, including at sub- regional, regional, and international levels.
- Political will is critical for progressing water cooperation.
- Additional commitments and actions on water cooperation by all actors are needed, building on the work of the Transboundary Water Cooperation Coalition and other relevant initiatives.

Interactive Dialogue 5: Water Action Decade: Accelerating the implementation of the objectives of the Decade, including through the UN Secretary General's Action Plan

The fifth and final interactive dialogue took place in the forenoon of 24 March 2023, co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Senior Minister and Coordinating Minister for Social Policies of Singapore, and H.E. Ms. Monica Medina, Assistant Secretary for Oceans, International Environment and Scientific Affairs, Department of State of the United States. The co-chairs appealed that the international community must treat water as a global common good and protect it in the interest of all communities and nations. They recognized that science, evidence and the knowledge of indigenous communities needed to be brought into the economics and governance of water. The world could not continue with a "business-as-usual" attitude as it set the course for the rest of the Water Action Decade, they stressed. They supported reforming andstreamlining the multinational development financing institutions to better integrate water and climate into their work, adding that finance ministers must recognize the value of water.

The panelists included H.E Ms. Tanja Fajon, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign and European Affairs of Slovenia; H.E. Mr. Basuki Hadimuljono, Minister for Public Works and Public Housing of Indonesia; H.E. Ms. Zulfiya Suleimenova, Minister for Environment and Natural Resources of Kazakhstan; and Ms. Usha Rao-Monari, Associate Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The lead discussants were Ms. Mina Guli Founder and CEO of Thirst Foundation, Ms. Sivan Ya'ari Founder and CEO of Innovation: Africa; and Mr. Torgny Holmgren, Executive Director of the Stockholm International Water Institute. Mr. Dongyu Qu, Director-General of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) moderated the dialogue. 28 participants made interventions.

Participants had a broad convergence on several issues including that water crisis was both local and global; and valuing water was critical. Many indicated the need to strengthen the governance on water and called for collectively mobilizing international finance and investment in water, as well as the appointment of a UN Special Envoy on Water. To bring coherence to various institutional initiatives and mechanisms emerging from this dialogue, the co-chairscalled on the UN Secretary General to formulate a plan of action on water, and to ensure the integration of water into other inter-governmental processes, including the SDG Summit, the Summit of the Future, and upcoming climate and biodiversity COPs.

Key ideas and proposals emerging from the interactive dialogue were:

- Water and the global water cycle need to be protected collectively, and in the interests of all. The global water cycle is now out of balance; the water crisis is interacting with the twin crises of climate change and the loss of biodiversity in ways that exacerbate all three.
- Valuing water correctly, including pricing water closer to its true value while providing appropriate targeted subsidies, could help secure more efficient, equitable and sustainable use of water.
- Transform the multilateral system for water within the UN system including by:
  - Appointing a UN Special Envoy for Water;
  - Convening a time-bound task force of Member States to work with and support the UN Special Envoy for Water and help develop a plan of action on water;
  - Strengthening the governance of water within the UN system, including through the strengthening UN-Water; and
  - Strengthening the connections among existing mechanisms to collect and share data on water, for early warning alerts and analytics to inform policy and, if needed, consider establishing new mechanisms to fill any gaps.

- Reform multilateral finance institutions to mobilize capital to better support Member States in achieving water, climate and nature resilience.
- Bring together every stream of finance – redirecting subsidies that encourage the inefficient use of water and bringing together both public and private streams of finance internationally to lower the cost of capital for water, especially in the developing world.
- Incentivize joint action on the ground through networked multi-stakeholder coalitions – local communities, Indigenous Peoples, civil society organizations, local and national governments, and international organizations.
- Develop skills and build capacity globally - especially for women and those working at the frontlines of water conservation.
- Convene the next UN Water Conference before 2028 to sustain the momentum of water- related actions and foster accountability for progress after this conference.
- Cultural change is required, and we must learn from past mistakes to move forward with activities that promote sustainable water management and provide co-benefits for society, environment, and economy.

Closing Plenary

The Closing Plenary consisted of presentations of summaries of the five interactive dialogues by the co-chairs; consideration of the Report of the Credentials Committee and adoption of a draft resolution concerning the credentials of representatives to the Conference; introduction of the outcome of the Conference, which included the summary of proceedings and voluntary commitments announced and registered with the Conference Secretariat. The Ex-Officio Vice President from the Kingdom of the Netherlands (Prime Minister of Aruba) called for concerted action and announced the extension of registration of commitments for the Water Action Agenda, which would then be reported on during the global review of SDG 6 at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2023. The Rapporteur- General of the Conference introduced the draft report of the Conference, which was then adopted.

The Closure of the Conference heard concluding remarks by the UN Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly, the Chair of UN-Water and Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the President of Tajikistan. The formal proceedings were then suspended for an informal ceremony to mark the Water Action Agenda, which was officially presented to the UN Secretary-General and President of the General Assembly. Next, the Vice President of the World Economic Forum, the Vice President of the African Development Bank, the Chief Executive Officer of Bayer, the Mayor of Freetown, Sierra Leone, and a representative of an indigenous community were invited on stage to share their views on the Conference. They reinforced the messages of the interactive dialogues and offered to help build the new narrative for transforming water issues into opportunities that benefit inclusive, connected communities, the private sector and nature. The UN 2023 Conference closed with a video showcasing the various moments and achievements over the three days of events and deliberations.

ANNEX

Water Action Agenda Synopsis Report* (as of 30 March 2023)

(**This Water Action Agenda Synopsis Report has been produced and provided by the co-hosts of the 2023 UN Water Conference*.)

The Water Action Agenda is the structured collection of all water-related voluntary commitments to accelerate progress in the second half of the Water Action Decade 2018-2028 and second half of the 2030 Agenda.

Building on on-going efforts and harnessing the political momentum of the Conference, the Water Action Agenda mobilizes action across countries, sectors, and stakeholders to meet the global water and sanitation-related goals and targets. It translates political momentum into tangible and ambitious action to bring progress back on track. As such, the Water Action Agenda increases political support for advancing the globally agreed water-related goals and targets, while relying on and strengthening existing agreements and processes. It is inclusive of all relevant stakeholders, integrated across sectors, aligned with other ongoing intergovernmental processes and brings transformative actions for the Water Action Decade 2018-2028 in the spirit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The key building blocks of the Water Action Agenda are:

01

Commit to action:

Mobilizing voluntary commitments to action across countries, sectors and stakeholders, aimed at accelerated implementation and improved impact towards achieving SDG 6 and other water-related goals and targets. Voluntary commitments will be gathered, showcased and tracked on a dedicated platform.

02

Sustain and scale up implementation

All stakeholders have a role to play to drive the implementation of the Water Action Agenda and to ensure follow up with partners on what works for replication and scaling up.

03

Follow-up and review processes

Showcasing successes and learning from what works and what does not. The High-level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF) and inter-governmental, private sector and NGO fora across key sectors will be utilized. Analyses of water-related progress across sectors and other SDGs and global frameworks will be done annually.

Through a conscientious cycle of commitment, implementation and review, and peer-learning among actors, the Water Action Agenda enables replication and scaling up of workable solutions at a global scale. The process allows for change and adaptation, if commitments are less successful, and thus becomes a mechanism for review, capacity and innovation.

While no set of commitments can comprehensively address all water needs worldwide, a few general conditions and characteristics describe the Agenda:

- Organizations making the commitment: A balance between "foundational" organizations (smaller and/or less well-established) and "institutional" organizations (larger and/or more well-established).
- Geographic scale: A balance among global, national, and local commitments.
- Location: Adequate coverage of commitments across countries, with a special focus on least developed countries.
- Timeline: Commitments that span multiple years, to assure adequate time for implementation.
- Funding: Commitments that are adequately funded.
- Lead institution: A balance among types of institutions spearheading commitments (i.e., governments, global institutions, NGOs, and universities).
- Themes: A balance across the principal water themes identified by the Conference organizers, i.e., Water for Health; Water for Sustainable Development; Water for Climate, Resilience and Environment; Water for Cooperation (transboundary and cross-sectoral); and Water Action Decade.
- Water users: A balance across types of water users, i.e., domestic, agriculture, and industry.
- Urban v. rural: A balance between urban and rural commitments.
- Game-changer or not: Commitments that are substantial (and innovative, transformative, scalable, replicable).
- Quantitative targets: Commitments that have set quantitative targets for themselves.

I. Results

As of 28 March 2023, the UN has received 719 Water Action Agenda commitments[1]. Following is our evaluation of these commitments using the above-listed criteria.

Organization making the commitment. To date, the UN has received commitments from 239 "foundational" (smaller and/or less well-established) organizations and 480 "institutional" (larger and/or more well-established) organizations. It is important to have a good balance of commitments from these two types of organizations, as the "foundational" organizations tend to work more on the ground, and "institutional" organizations tend to work more at national, regional, and global levels.

Geographic scale. To date, the UN has received 221 commitments that are sub-national in scale. There are 147 national level commitments, 112 regional level commitments, 234 global level commitments, and 5 commitments whose geographic scale is unclear.

Location. To date, the UN has received the following number of commitments by region:

- African countries: 137
- Asian countries: 104
- Australia & New Zealand: 5
- European countries: 69
- Latin American & Caribbean countries: 81
- Multiple regions: 300
- Unclear: 3
- United States & Canada: 20

Timeline. To date, the UN has received 128 commitments with a timeline ending in 2023 or earlier, and 574 commitments with a timeline ending between 2024 and 2037. There were 17 commitments whose end date was "not applicable".

Funding. To date, the UN has received 35 commitments with explicit funding of $100,000 or less; 157 commitments with explicit funding of between $100,000 and $9,500,000,000; 521 commitments whose amount of funding was unclear; 3 commitments whose funding was "not applicable"; and 3 commitments whose funding was specified in another commitment.

Lead institution. To date, the UN has received 309 commitments from NGOs, of which 88 were classified as local NGOs. Governments submitted 186 commitments, 77 were from multilateral organizations (including UN agencies), 25 were from partnerships, and 72 were from the private sector, 1 was from a tribe, 48 were from universities, and 1 from a philanthropic institution.

Themes. To date, the UN has received the following number of commitments by theme:

- Water for Health: 364
- Water for Sustainable Development: 360
- Water for Climate, Resilience, and Environment: 167
- Water for Cooperation: 89
- Water Action Decade: 44
- Not applicable: 27
- Unclear: 57

Water users. To date, the UN has received the following number of commitments by water user type:

- Domestic: 290
- Industry: 39
- Agriculture: 92
- Not applicable: 41
- Unclear: 1
- Unspecified: 331

Urban vs. rural. To date, the UN has received 107 commitments classified as rural, 60 classified as urban, 25 classified as urban and rural, and 527 classified as "unspecified".

Quantitative targets. To date, the UN has received 157 commitments with quantitative targets and 562 commitments without quantitative targets

II. Risks identified

- Fewer commitments from smaller than larger institutions. Our results reveal about half as many commitments coming from smaller and/or less well-established organizations (239 or 33%) as commitments coming from larger and/or more well-established organizations (480 or 67%). Commitments from smaller institutions are important – we need such "on-the- ground" projects – but there is nevertheless a risk that many of these commitments will lack sufficient funding or expertise to remedy problems.
- Good balance in terms of geographic scale and global regional representation. We have a good distribution of commitments from global to local scales and across developing and developed regions of the world.
- Significant number of short duration commitments. About 20% of the commitments have a timeline that ends in 2023 or earlier or have an end date deemed "not applicable". There is a risk that many of these commitments do not have a long enough timeline to produce substantial results.
- Most commitments have an unclear amount of funding. Around 72% of the commitments have an "unclear" amount of funding. Additional commitments have funding deemed "not applicable" or have funding of $100,000 or less. This raises the prospect of commitments without sufficient funding to make substantial impacts.
- A sizable percentage of the commitments are coming from NGOs. About 12% of commitments are from "Local NGOs". Another 31% are from larger NGOs. About 26% of commitments come from "Governments", about 11% are from "Multilateral Organizations", and about 10% are from the private sector. The representation of governments and multilateral organizations is a bit low, raising the risk of insufficient official support for the Water Action Agenda.
- Many commitments for "Water for Health" and "Water for Sustainable Development". About 51% of the commitments address "Water for Health," a proxy for water, sanitation, andhygiene (WASH) services. About 50% are for "Water for Sustainable Development," a proxy for water resources management. Relatively few address "Water for Climate, Resilience, and Environment" (23%) or "Water for Cooperation" (12%). Note that the percentages do not add up to 100% because many commitments address more than one theme. There is some risk that too few commitments are addressing climate change or cooperation across national borders or economic sectors.
- Relatively few commitments for "agricultural" water use. About 40% of commitments are for "domestic" or municipal water users. About 13% address "agricultural" water users and 5% address "industrial" water users. About 52% "unspecified", "not applicable", or "unclear". Given that agriculture accounts for 70% of all water use worldwide, this may be a significant risk.
- Most commitments lack quantitative targets. Only 22% of commitments employ quantitative targets. This makes it difficult to evaluate their success, both for those implementing the projects and those evaluating them from outside.

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