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Water Must Be at Centre of Global Political Agenda,

Secretary-General Stresses at Conference's Closing, Urging All to 'Recommit to Our Common Future'



Following are UN Secretary-General António Guterres' closing brief remarks to the United Nations 2023 Water Conference, in New York

My thanks to the Netherlands and Tajikistan for co-hosting this conference — a milestone at the midway point of the Water Action Decade.

Together, your ambitious vision and dedication to action and transformation is propelling us towards a sustainable, equitable and inclusive water-secure future for people and planet alike. This conference demonstrated a central truth. As humanity's most precious global common good, water unites us all. And it flows across a number of global challenges.

Water is about health, sanitation, hygiene and disease-prevention. Water is about peace. Water is about sustainable development, fighting poverty, supporting food systems and creating jobs and prosperity. Water is about human rights and gender equality. That's why water needs to be at the centre of the global political agenda.

All of humanity's hopes for the future depend, in some way, on charting a new science-based course to bring the Water Action Agenda to life. They depend on realizing the game-changing, inclusive and action-oriented commitments made by Member States and others at this Conference.

This means reinforcing water's place as a fundamental human right. It means reducing the pressures on our hydrological system and ensuring good decision-making and smart policies. It means developing new, alternative food systems to reduce the unsustainable use of water in food production and agriculture.

It means designing and implementing a new global water information system to guide plans and priorities by 2030. It means integrating our approach on water, ecosystems and climate to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and strengthen communities.

This includes resilient infrastructure, water pipelines and wastewater treatment plans, and ensuring every person in the world is protected with early warning systems against natural disasters by 2027.

It means continuing to press for climate justice and global action to limit global warming to a 1.5°C. And it means dramatically accelerating resources and investment into the ability of all countries to reach Sustainable Development Goal 6.

A number of other follow-up steps are under consideration, including the appointment of a special envoy on water to advance the prominence of water in the lead-up to this September's SDG [Sustainable Development Goals] Summit, as well as the Summit of the Future next year. I look forward to reviewing our progress during July's high level political meetings. And I can assure the full support of the United Nations system every step of the way.

Without water, there can be no sustainable development. As we leave this historic conference, let's re-commit to our common future. Let's take the next steps in our journey to a water-secure future for all

Türkiye approaches transboundary water issue in cooperation: Minister

March 25 2023

[Türkiye](#) approaches the [water](#) issue from a purely humanitarian point of view and sees the transboundary waters as an element of cooperation rather than a conflict between riparian countries, Agriculture and Forestry Minister Vahit Kirişçi has stated.

Türkiye, which is under water stress, has established systems for the management of water resources with a rational and holistic approach, Kirişçi said during his speech at the United Nations Water Conference held in New York, the United States.



The country attaches importance to the development of hydrology and climate-based water observation networks on a national scale, the minister noted.

Emphasizing that they are open to constructive cooperation with riparian countries on the issue of waters crossing the border, Kirişçi said, “We think that handling complex water issues with the perception that they directly threaten international peace and security will harm cooperation and good neighborly relations within the framework of mutual trust.”

Kirişçi described the country’s approach to transboundary waters as “purely humanitarian,” stating that Türkiye always acts with an understanding that takes into account the needs of riparian countries.

The country comprehends the issue of waters as an element of cooperation rather than a conflict, Kirişçi added.

“Since each river basin that crosses borders has its own characteristics and dynamics, we are of the opinion that the issues should be handled only between riparian countries. We never think that the mediation approaches of third parties or the international coercive measures that can be taken in this regard will contribute to the common goals of cooperation in transboundary waters,” Kirişçi explained.

Expressing the U.N. water conventions are far from reflecting the will of the entire international community, Kirişçi noted that not only upstream countries but also downstream countries have responsibilities in crossing rivers, so all riparian countries should use water efficiently and rationally.

Referring to the U.N.’s sixth sustainable development goal on clean water and sanitation, Kirişçi supports the initiatives regarding the appointment of a U.N. special representative for water.

“It would be appropriate to raise awareness of the U.N.’s sixth sustainable development goal and to focus on water-related investments,” Kirişçi expressed.

Kirişçi also underlined that Türkiye is one of the countries that provide a considerable amount of humanitarian aid, adding that the country has implemented various water projects in different parts of the world, especially in Africa.

The country has provided drinking water to nearly 1.8 million people with 521 water wells in African counties since 2015, Kirişçi stated.

<https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkiye-approaches-transboundary-water-issue-in-cooperation-minister-181844>

Side Event - Water and Energy for Sustainable Development: Integrated Solutions supporting Regional Cooperation, Climate Resilience, and Biodiversity, UN 2023 Water Conference, 23 March | New York



Ensuring universal access to modern and sustainable energy, water, and sanitation services, by addressing the three dimensions of sustainable development – the economic, social, and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner, lies at the heart of sustainable development.

On 23 March on the margins of the UN 2023



Water Conference UN DESA in cooperation with members of the Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions Network convened a Side-Event to bring together multi-stakeholders to discuss and showcase existing initiatives addressing the water-energy nexus and share knowledge on replicable and scalable effective solutions.

The event included expert panelists from countries covering major world regions. Participants included representatives from Member States and from public, private, and non-profit organizations, as well as international organizations, and practitioners involved and interested in the research, development, management, and implementation of integrated water and energy solutions.

The side event has been organized by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Spatial Planning of the Republic of Slovenia on behalf of the Transboundary Water Cooperation Coalition.

The event was held in the ECOSOC Chamber of the UN Headquarters in New York at 18:30-19:45 local time and webcasted by UN Web TV.



Context

Transboundary waters account for 60 per cent of the world's freshwater flows. More than 3 billion people depend on them. Cooperation on shared resources is therefore essential to promote sustainable economic development, human and environmental health, biodiversity, climate action and resilience, disaster risk reduction, and peace. Unfortunately, cooperation in most transboundary basins is not fit to deal with future challenges and progress is too slow.

To sustain and advance cooperation, the Transboundary Water Cooperation Coalition, a diverse, multi-stakeholder coalition of actors from around the world with a wide range of functions and capacities, was formed. In preparation to the Conference, the Coalition has provided a catalyzing framework for the submission of voluntary commitments on transboundary water cooperation as part of the Water Action Agenda.

The Transboundary Water Cooperation Coalition is a multistakeholder partnership making a commitment to the Water Action Agenda (WAA) to promote and support transboundary water cooperation at all levels worldwide. T

Objectives

The side event highlighted commitments made to the WAA by countries and stakeholders, including basin organizations, aiming to improve transboundary water cooperation. Highlighted commitments addressed different dimensions: Legal and institutional, Data, information, knowledge and technical support, Capacity development and Funding and financing.

A particular emphasis has been on the benefits of transboundary water cooperation, and on financing.

Speakers included high-level representatives (Ministers, heads of agencies and organizations) of coalition members and of other transboundary cooperation actors, such as river basin organizations.

Transboundary Water Cooperation Coalition



UNECE (United Nations / Multilateral body)

A diverse, multi-stakeholder coalition of actors from around the world with a wide range of functions and capacities, the Coalition will inspire and foster equitable and sustainable cooperation on transboundary waters and provide support through its members. The coalition will provide a catalysing framework for commitments and progress on transboundary water cooperation, especially linked to the UN 2023 Water Conference and the call for voluntary commitments that will comprise one of the outcomes of the Conference, the Water Action Agenda. The Coalition objective is to promote and support both the sustaining and the advancement of transboundary water cooperation in the context of the Water Action Agenda and SDG 6, in light of growing risks, including those linked to climate change. Ambitions to achieve this objective may include:

Increase the proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement in place in line with SDG indicator 6.5.2

Increase the number of Parties to the 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) and 1997 Convention on the Law of Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (Watercourses Convention)

Increase the impact and effectiveness of River Basins Organisations and operational transboundary arrangements to foster regional development and prevent conflicts

Increase the number of projects and interventions supporting transboundary water cooperation (e.g., dialogue, analysis of benefits of cooperation, data-sharing, transboundary climate change adaptation, etc.)

Increase international and national funding for transboundary water cooperation. The objective and ambitions will be achieved by: Lifting the voice of the transboundary water community in an inclusive, diverse but unified manner

Demonstrating and communicating the benefits of effective and sustainable transboundary water

cooperation, including for upstream countries and in the adaptation to new climate challenges, and how to overcome bottlenecks to cooperation

Catalyzing financial and technical support to initiate dialogue, support and advance cooperation efforts and assess their impacts.

Providing impetus for concrete actions and commitments related to equitable and sustainable transboundary water cooperation, to “push” progress towards mutually beneficial outcomes

Giving particular emphasis on cooperation in transboundary aquifers considering how far behind it lags with respect to international rivers and lakes

Expected Impact

Country and stakeholder engagement at the UN Water 2023 Conference and commitments on transboundary cooperation, notably in the context of the Water Action Agenda and SDG 6

Consolidated transboundary water community around common objectives and provision of a space for multis-stakeholder engagement which adds to what is already existing

Demonstrate strong policy and stakeholder engagement by showcasing high-level transformative commitments

Optimization of resources and addressing gaps that only a coalition, and not one organization, can carry out, utilizing the different strengths of each coalition member Inspiring new thinking on solutions to transboundary water cooperation and catalyzing new ideas and initiatives

Partners

Chile Dominican Republic Estonia Finland France Germany Hungary Iraq Kazakhstan Morocco Namibia The Netherlands Panama Senegal Slovenia Switzerland Uganda European Union Inter-American Development Bank (IaDB) Organization of American States (OAS) World Bank Global Environment Facility (GEF) UNECE UNEP UNESCO ESCWA UNCDF UNDP International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre (IGRAC) Centro Regional para la Gestión de Aguas Subterranneas de América Latina y el Caribe (CeReGAS) Global Water Partnership (GWP) IHE Delft Institute for Water Education International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO) Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) IUCN Geneva Water Hub, EcoPeace Middle East, University of Kinsasa Water Diplomacy

Reporting on SDG indicator 6.5.2 and under the Water Convention

Reporting on transboundary water cooperation



The UNECE reporting exercises on SDG Indicator 6.5.2 and under the Water Convention are unique mechanisms for assessing the state of transboundary water cooperation worldwide. Countries sharing transboundary waters submit national reports every 3 years. Country reports provide information for the calculation of the national SDG indicator 6.5.2 values; they also offer a wealth of other important information on water management practices in transboundary basins, ranging from the scope of cooperative arrangements and joint body tasks, to countries' difficulties and achievements in advancing transboundary water cooperation. For Water Convention Parties, the exercise also allows to track the progress in implementing the Convention.

Mandate

SDG target 6.5 calls for countries to “implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate”. Indicator 6.5.2, defined as the “*proportion of transboundary basin area [within a country] with an operational arrangement for water cooperation*”, was agreed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2016 and subsequently adopted in 2017 by the General Assembly as part of the Global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. UNECE and UNESCO were entrusted as custodian agencies for indicator 6.5.2.

The adoption of the SDGs and their targets in 2015 coincided with the introduction of reporting under the Water Convention through decision (VII/2) at the 7th session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention. To maximize the efficiency and create synergies between the two reporting processes, it was decided to combine them. In 2018, the 8th session of the Meeting of the Parties adopted a revised template for .

reporting together with decision ECE/MP.WAT/54/Add.2 on reporting. In 2021, the 9th session of the Meeting of the Parties adopted decision ECE/MP.WAT/2021/6 on reporting that outlines the requirements for an online reporting system, to be developed for future reporting exercises. Thus, Parties to the Convention fill out one template to report on SDG indicator 6.5.2 and under the Water Convention.

What is the current status of reporting on transboundary water cooperation?

The second reporting exercise was held in 2020/2021, with 80% of countries sharing transboundary waters and all Parties to the Water Convention submitting their national reports. The results and main outcomes of the second monitoring are presented in the second joint UNECE-UNESCO report on the Progress on Transboundary Water Cooperation: Global status of SDG indicator 6.5.2 and acceleration needs, 2021 published on behalf of UN Water and in the second report on the Progress on transboundary water cooperation under the water convention: Second report on implementation of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, 2017–2020.

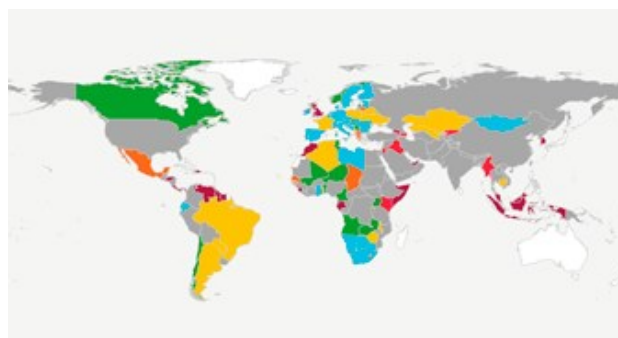
2023 third reporting exercise

In 2023, the third round of global data collection on SDG6 global indicators is conducted in the framework of the Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG6. It involves countries collecting and reporting data on various SDG 6 indicators to multiple UN agencies, coordinated by UN-Water.

Countries sharing transboundary waters will be invited to submit their national reports by 30 June 2023.

The reporting template from the third reporting exercise 2023 is available in: English, French, Russian and Spanish in UNECE web site.

Source :https://unece.org/environmental-policy/water/transboundary_water_cooperation_reporting?unsubscribe=221



6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



Call to submit national reports for the 3rd reporting exercise on SDG indicator 6.5.2

All States sharing transboundary waters worldwide are invited to submit their national reports for the 3rd reporting exercise on SDG indicator 6.5.2 by 30 June 2023 to UNECE and UNESCO as co-custodian agencies. Countries are encouraged to consider the opportunities to coordinate with neighbouring countries when completing the SDG indicator 6.5.2 national report.



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Iconic World Heritage glaciers to disappear by 2050, warns UNESCO



Aerial view of the dwindling ice on the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro.

Some of the world's most iconic glaciers are set to disappear by 2050, according to a new study by UNESCO, which highlights the accelerated melting of glaciers in World Heritage sites.

Glaciers in a third of sites are under threat, regardless of efforts to limit temperature increases.

However, the study outlines that it is still possible to save the other two-thirds, if the rise in global temperatures does not exceed 1.5°C compared to the pre-industrial era. UNESCO says that this will be a major challenge facing delegates at the upcoming COP27. Fifty UNESCO World Heritage sites are home to glaciers, representing almost 10% of the Earth's total glacierized area. They include the highest (next to Mt. Everest), the longest (in Alaska), and the last remaining glaciers in Africa.

Call to action

"This report is a call to action. Only a rapid reduction in our CO2 emissions levels can save glaciers and the exceptional biodiversity that depends on them. COP27 will have a crucial role to help find solutions to this issue. UNESCO is determined to support states in pursuing this goal," said Audrey Azoulay, UNESCO's Director-General.

In addition to drastically reduced carbon emissions, UNESCO is advocating for the creation of a new international fund for glacier monitoring and preservation. Such a fund would support comprehensive research, promote exchange networks between all stakeholders and implement early warning and disaster risk reduction measures. 3 November 2022

We need to build a future,
Where people live in harmony with nature

HPA

Think Forward . Lead Forward