

## 31st UN-Water Meeting: 23-24 August 2019

The 31st UN-Water Meeting discussed progress on and next steps for joint initiatives that UN-Water Members and Partners have undertaken to ensure that the UN is “delivering as one” to address global water challenges.

Many of the initiatives discussed during this meeting, which took place in Stockholm, Sweden, from 23-24 August 2019, immediately prior to World Water Week 2019, will contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with particular emphasis on Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6) on clean water and sanitation. These include the Integrated Monitoring Initiative (IMI) for SDG 6, which is supported by the custodians of the SDG 6 indicators. Several speakers at the UN-Water Meeting said this initiative has resulted in a more advanced monitoring approach for SDG 6 compared to other SDGs. Participants received a preview of one IMI project, the SDG Data Portal, which will be officially launched on 27 August 2019, during World Water Week.

Another initiative discussed at the 23-24 August meeting stemmed from a recommendation by the High-Level Panel on Water that was endorsed at the 29th UN-Water Meeting in August 2018. During discussions on the agenda item on the process leading to the 2021 and 2023 UN high-level meetings mandated in the midterm review resolution on the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–2028, participants highlighted the value that these two meetings could have for water and sanitation policy, if their preparations and objectives are properly followed-up on.

Additional agenda items addressed global events that are expected to shape water policy opportunities in the coming decade, including the UN reform process, and increased attention to the water, peace and security nexus. Delegates discussed what UN-Water could offer for country-level engagement in the context of UN reform, which has changed the way that the UN works with countries. A panel discussion considered how to situate water in climate change processes, and participants conducted an initial discussion on ideas to include in a roadmap for the UN-Water Strategy to 2030.

UN-Water Meetings bring Members and Partners together twice a year to carry out the mandate of informing policies, monitoring and reporting, and inspiring action on water and sanitation issues. Over 60 delegates from UN-Water Members and Partners registered for the 31st UN-Water Meeting, representing

the UN Secretariat and UN agencies, funds, programmes and other entities, multilateral environmental agreements, and civil society organizations. An additional 18 observers from governments and other organizations also attended. Participants agreed that the 32nd UN-Water meeting would convene in January 2020 in Rome, Italy.

## Brief History of UN-Water

While over 30 UN organizations carry out water and sanitation programmes, no single UN entity is dedicated exclusively to these issues. In 1977, the UN’s Intersecretariat Group for Water Resources began coordinating UN activities on water. Subsequently, in 2003, the UN Administrative Coordination Committee’s Subcommittee on Water Resources was transformed into UN-Water and was endorsed by the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination. UN-Water plays a coordinating role within the UN, to ensure that the UN family “delivers as one” in response to water-related challenges.

**Initiatives:** The overarching focus of UN-Water’s Members and Partners is to support UN Member States to sustainably manage water and sanitation. This mission is carried out through three areas of work: informing policies, monitoring and reporting, and inspiring action.

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Efforts to inform policies focus on placing water and sanitation issues on the agenda of key UN agreements, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs, the Paris Agreement on climate change, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development. SDG 6 calls for the international community to strive to ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all by 2030.

Efforts to monitor and report seek to provide coherent and reliable data and information on key water trends and management issues. The IMI for SDG 6 builds on and expands the experience and lessons learned during the Millennium Development Goal period, and aims to: develop methodologies and tools to monitor SDG 6 global indicators; raise awareness at the national and global levels regarding SDG 6 monitoring; enhance technical and institutional country capacity for monitoring; and compile country data and report on global progress towards SDG 6.

Efforts to inspire action include coordination of the annual observance of World Water Day on 22 March, and World Toilet Day on 19 November. UN-Water releases the annual World Water Development Report (WWDR) on World Water Day.

**Governance Structure:** UN agencies, programmes and funds with a water-related mandate are UN-Water Members. Partners are international organizations, professional unions, associations or other civil society groups that are actively involved in water and that have the capacity and willingness to contribute to the work of UN-Water and meet UN-Water's partnership criteria.

UN-Water Senior Programme Managers (SPMs) are the representatives of UN-Water Members. They provide the overall governance and strategic direction and constitute UN-Water's highest operational decision-making body.

The Chair of UN-Water is nominated among the UN Executive Heads following consultations in the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination. The current UN-Water Chair is Gilbert Hounbo, President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The UN-Water Vice-Chair is elected among the UN-Water SPMs. The UN-Water Secretary is a senior staff member of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) in New York, US.

### Report from the 31st UN-Water Meeting

On Friday afternoon, 23 August 2019, Gilbert Hounbo, UN-Water Chair, welcomed participants to the Open Session, during which UN-Water Members invited UN-Water Partners to join their biannual meeting. He noted that several water crises have been in the media spotlight around the world and that "there is no time for complacency." He drew attention to the need to set UN-Water's 2030 strategy, highlighted the decision to convene UN high-level meetings in 2021 and 2023, and stressed the need to invigorate country-level support. He called for increasing UN-Water's relevance outside the UN and water communities, and thanked the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), one of UN-Water's main supporters, for joining the session.

Providing introductory remarks, Cecilia Scharp, Sida, reflected on global plans and trends and how Sida positions itself. She drew attention to climate change and biodiversity loss, and to a rise in populism around the world, noting there are fewer like-minded donors to turn to and that Sida looks to the EU and the UN. She highlighted the plight of journalists and environmental activists, as well as the importance of data and the risk of its manipulation. Looking to the future, she underscored the importance of the UN reform and its emphasis on partnerships, and called for new partnerships to find solutions and spur innovation.



Closing dais of the 31st UN-Water Meeting (L-R): **Leanne Burney**, UN-Water Programme Officer; **Nicolas Franke**, Special Assistant to the UN-Water Secretary; **Madhushree Chatterjee**, UN-Water Secretary; **Gilbert Hounbo**, UN-Water Chair; **Olcay Unver**, UN-Water Vice-Chair; and **Federico Properzi**, UN-Water Chief Technical Adviser.



Participants discussed the UN-Water Inventory, a new web tool that provides information on the UN-Water family's work on water and sanitation.

### **Selected Reports and Progress Updates**

**Progress Reports for Information:** UN-Water Chair Hounbo introduced this agenda item, drawing attention to reports from: the Expert Group on Regional Level Coordination; the Expert Group on Water Quality and Wastewater; the Expert Group on Water Scarcity; the Expert Group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the Task Force on Unconventional Water Resources; and the Task Force on Water Action Decade Implementation. Delegates agreed to take note of the reports.

**UN-Water Inventory – An Overview of the UN Family's Work on Water and Sanitation:** Olcay Unver, UN-Water Vice-Chair, introduced the UN-Water Inventory, which provides information on the UN-Water family's work on water and sanitation. He drew attention to the dynamic web tool that provides access to information on water and sanitation efforts and on the work of UN-Water's Members and Partners. He noted that the UN-Water Inventory can be filtered and searched, and that it will replace the UN-Water Activity Information System (AIS). Klas Moldéus, UN-Water Associate Expert, demonstrated the UN-Water Inventory web tool, including how the filters and search options function.

Participants raised concerns that valuable information from the AIS archive would be lost once the system is taken offline, with some suggesting ways to retain documents from the AIS. Federico Properzi, UN-Water Chief Technical Adviser, clarified that the AIS was outdated and static, and reiterated that a decision had been agreed at a past meeting to take it offline. Participants added text to the draft decision to allow Members to provide feedback on information from the AIS that should be retained in the UN-Water Inventory.

**Decision:** The UN-Water SPMs:

- welcome the UN-Water Inventory web tool and encourage those UN-Water Members and Partners who have not yet provided information to do so;
- decide that, given the launch of the online UN-Water Inventory, the AIS should be taken offline after Members and Partners have the opportunity to indicate which relevant information should be migrated to the Inventory; and
- thank the Task Force on the Inventory for completing its work.

**Update on the Process Leading to the 2021 and 2023 UN High-Level Meetings Mandated in the Midterm Review Resolution on the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018–2028:** Madhushree Chatterjee, UN-Water Secretary, highlighted that a Task Force on the high-

level meetings has been deliberating on the most effective process to feed into the 2021 and 2023 UN high-level meetings. She discussed the possibility of developing a modalities resolution, which would be adopted by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) and would outline process for the meetings. She said it could also include regional preparatory meetings leading up to the mid-term review of the Water Action Decade. She noted a proposal to convene a meeting to initiate discussions with stakeholders on options during the final quarter of 2019.

She noted the opportunity to coordinate the development and focus of a number of UN-Water reports and events with the two high-level meetings. For example:

- World Water Day in 2021 will focus on the theme "Valuing Water";
- UNGA will develop a report during its 77th session (2022-2023) to assess progress on implementation of the first half of the Decade, which could have implications for the 2023 WWDR; and
- the agenda for future sessions of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) will be set during the upcoming UNGA, with the resulting decision on when and how SDG 6 will be reviewed having implications for the production schedule of the next UN-Water Synthesis Report on the global status of SDG 6 and follow-on implications for UN-Water's activities leading to 2023.

During the discussion, Vladimir Smakhtin, Director, UN University Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH), and Task Force coordinator, mentioned suggestions to link activities for the Decade with those of the newly launched UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030). The opportunity to build synergies with the World Water Forum agenda was also highlighted, as was the need to begin preparations quickly in order to ensure the 2021 is a success.

**Decision:** Building on decision 6 of the 30th UN-Water Meeting, the SPMs reinforce the mandate of the Task Force on Water Action Decade Implementation to lead on UN-Water support to the resolution on the "Midterm comprehensive review of the implementation of the International Decade for Action, 'Water for Sustainable Development' 2018-2028," with a key activity being a UN-Water organized/supported side event in October 2019 in New York to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to reflect on the question "how do we get the most out of the high-level UN meetings on water in 2021 and 2023?"

**UN-Water Strategic Offer for Country-Level Engagement in the Context of UN Reform:** Amanda Marlin, Senior Advisor, Partnerships and Global Initiatives, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), and co-chair of the Task Force on Country-level Engagement, presented the Task Force's recommendations. These include informing UN Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams that UN-Water can provide: insight, information and data; expertise, technical assistance and support; and support for country-level advocacy on safe water and sanitation to influence policy and inspire action.

Via video conference, Jörg Schimmel, Senior Programme Officer, Interagency Programme Facilitation, UN Development Coordination Office (DCO), recalled that the recent UN reform process has developed an empowered and impartial Resident

Coordinator system by delinking the Resident Coordinators from the UN Development Programme (UNDP). He added that a central piece of the UN reform process is the development of cooperation frameworks for the UN to plan and implement at the country level. He said that UN Country Teams will consider how best to draw from across the UN to address country-level issues, and that new working modalities may be needed.

The Task Force recommended that UN-Water Members and Partners agree to approve the offer and disseminate it by posting it on the UN-Water website, sending it to UN Country Teams, and informing Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams of it, and UN-Water in general, through a webinar with DCO. The Task Force also recommended further planning to operationalize the offer and considering resource needs.

During the discussion, participants engaged in an extended debate that addressed, *inter alia*: implications of the proposal for country ownership; advantages of UN-Water to attract countries to work with it rather than with individual agencies; the value of learning which UN-Water Members and Partners are working in the same countries; the need to provide regional and national perspectives; and the need to manage expectations and resourcing for what UN-Water could provide before sending out the information.

**Decision:** The SPMs:

- approve UN-Water's offer to UN Country Teams and Resident Coordinators;
- request the UN-Water Chair to share the offer with the UN Resident Coordinators along with a proposal that UN-Water carries out a pilot phase of the offer in partnership with the UN DCO;
- task the UN-Water Task Force on Country-level Engagement to lead work on the pilot, including by developing a pilot work plan and assessing any resource implications associated with country-level engagement; and

- request the Task Force to report back on progress at the 32nd UN-Water Meeting.

**Updates on the UN-Water Policy Brief “The Global Water Conventions: Fostering Development and Peace”:**

Sonja Koeppel, Environmental Affairs Officer, UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), introduced updates on this UN-Water Policy Brief and presented the background documentation. She described the 1992 UNECE Helsinki Water Convention and the 1997 UN New York Convention on international watercourses and explained that the UN-Water Expert Group on Transboundary Waters had developed a policy brief, detailing why transboundary collaboration is important. She noted the brief delves into the complementarity and benefits of the two Conventions, and invited participants to comment on the draft. She said the brief would be launched in the final quarter of 2019.

During the discussion, participants questioned the timing of the launch, particularly in view of the need to integrate possible comments or additions. UN-Water Chair Hougbo proposed, and participants agreed, to modify the draft decision to reflect these concerns, noting that the launch would take place “pending final agreement of the Policy Brief.” The draft decision was adopted as amended.

**Decision:** The SPMs welcome progress on the Policy Brief and request the Expert Group, pending Policy Brief approval, to organize a launch event in autumn 2019 in New York, with high-level participation. The SPMs also entrust the Expert Group to develop an action plan for disseminating the Policy Brief, including milestone events where it could be promoted.

**Preliminary Results of the Communications' Impact**

**Survey:** Daniella Bostrom, UN-Water Communications Manager, introduced the preliminary results of the communications' impact survey. She highlighted that over 2000 people from around the globe had responded in six languages and that there was a 50-50



A view of the full conference room



Participants during the Open Session

gender balance. She reported that, on brand awareness, over 70% are familiar with UN-Water. On message uptake, for example for campaign messages, she said that 92% understand the “water for all” message. She noted that all respondents are willing to take action and are doing so at different levels. She underscored that next steps include promoting the survey in all official UN languages, and further analyzing responses from those outside the water, sanitation and development sectors, while capitalizing on people’s motivation to take action.

Participants pondered how to increase the interest of journalists; suggested putting the survey’s findings into context by comparing how UN-Water as a network fares with respect to other similar networks, such as the Global Water Partnership (GWP); and called for carrying out an in-depth analysis of one of UN-Water’s flagship projects, such as the WWDR.

Participants took note of the presentation.

### ***Strategic Discussion: Situating Water in Climate Change Processes***

Monika Weber-Fahr, GWP Executive Secretary and CEO, moderated a strategic discussion on situating water in the climate change process. She challenged the room to think about whether water is adequately represented in climate discussions and, if not, whether this is due to a lack of knowledge and awareness or to the political and economic situation.

Sonja Koeppel, representing the UN-Water Expert Group on Water and Climate, noted that over the past six months, the group had worked on a policy brief launched in July that defines ways of working together. She stressed that: the time to act is now; water is part of the solution; water management practices and transboundary cooperation should be improved; and financing must be rethought. She also highlighted the importance of water in climate mitigation and adaptation measures and suggested that UN-Water reach out to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at the highest level, as well as through focal points.

Maggie White, Senior Manager, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), underscored that over 90% of Nationally

Determined Contributions (NDCs) consider water. She called for separating global and local-level processes, noting that no solution fits all. Regarding participating in the Conference of the Parties (COP), she suggested engaging more with the UNFCCC subsidiary bodies. She also called for: bringing solutions to countries; engaging on an ongoing basis to advance solutions; ensuring a presence in non-official climate processes such as regional climate weeks; and increasing engagement in the HLPP.

Michel Lavín Espinosa, Third Secretary, Embassy of Chile in Sweden, underscored national initiatives pertaining to plastics and ocean conservation, noting that demand for such actions is often driven by grassroots, civil society actors. He described the impacts of climate change nationally, noting growing awareness and a need to “put our money where our mouth is” and invest in research and new technology. He emphasized that decisions need to be taken at the global level, such as at COPs, but at the country level as well.

Niels Vlaanderen, Coordinator International Water Affairs, Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, the Netherlands, described how his country started discussing ways to behave in a world with a changing climate ten years ago, taking into account water and socio-economic perspectives. He called for building political momentum and being ready when momentum is achieved. He favored thinking holistically and systematically, and reaching out beyond the converted, using their language, for instance using GDP measurements pertaining to water when addressing finance ministers, rather than simply presenting on the urgency of water issues. He called for a coordinated approach at the UN level, involving others and measuring implementation in order to accelerate it.

During the discussion, a participant underscored the importance of annual “State of the Global Climate” reports as drivers of climate COPs and suggested a similar report should be collated for water. Participants were asked to consider what they could do, collectively or as individual organizations, to ensure water makes its way into global climate change processes. Several participants emphasized the need to focus on local and national level action, and including water issues in national plans.

Panelists' concluding remarks included encouraging UN-Water to further push the topic, showcasing what works and demonstrating ways to work together. Participants were encouraged to coordinate their attendance at UNFCCC COP 25 in Santiago, Chile, in December 2019, and to reach out and listen to the climate community.

### **Monitoring and Reporting**

**Integrated Monitoring Initiative:** Amanda Marlin, Senior Advisor, Partnerships and Global Initiatives, UNICEF, provided an update on the World Health Organization (WHO)/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) outputs in 2019. The JMP is responsible for global monitoring of targets 6.1 and 6.2 on drinking water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). Activities included: expansion of the JMP website with interactive visualization of new data on schools and health care facilities; a global baseline report on WASH in Health Care Facilities; and support for the integration of water quality testing and SDG indicators in household surveys.

Bruce Gordon, WASH Coordinator, WHO, provided an update on the UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS). WHO is co-custodian of SDG targets 6a and 6b (with UNEP and the OECD). GLAAS reports on the inputs and the enabling environment required to sustain and extend WASH systems and services to all. Gordon said the UN-Water GLAAS 2019 Report would be launched on 28 August 2019, and that 115 countries and 29 external support agencies had participated in the GLAAS 2018/2019 cycle.

William Reidhead, UN-Water Global Monitoring Officer, said that the first phase of the IMI involved establishing baseline data, while the second phase, which runs from 2019 to 2022, involves building country ownership and capacity. He noted that: 2019 had seen activities related to methodology refinement and capacity building; 2020 would focus on a global data drive and capacity building; 2021 would involve the validation, analysis and progress reporting; and 2022 would provide input to high-level processes. He said that "roof" activities have included building

the SDG 6 Data Portal, which will be launched on 27 August 2019, and preparing for the data drive in 2020.

**Presentation of the UN-Water SDG 6 Data Portal:** Maria Schade, UN-Water Global Monitoring Specialist, presented the SDG 6 Data Portal. She highlighted that the Portal's objectives include: tracking overall progress towards SDG 6 at the global, regional and national levels; enabling assessment and analysis of the state of water resources and linkages to other sectors; raising awareness of water and sanitation issues to help catalyze action; encouraging and improving SDG 6 monitoring and reporting at all levels; and providing an entry point to the wealth of water and sanitation information available within the UN system. She provided a preview of the maps, satellite views, graphs and other features on the Data Portal.

During the discussion, several speakers congratulated those involved with the Portal and highlighted that SDG 6 monitoring is advanced compared to other SDGs. Participants inquired about the source of the SDG 6 data and were informed that it was supplied directly by the custodian agencies for each indicator.

### **Open Space Session**

Olcay Unver, UN-Water Vice-Chair, introduced the Open Space session. Kate Medlicott, Team Leader, Sanitation and Wastewater, WHO, introduced the leaders and topics proposed for discussion.

Group 1 addressed microplastics in water and was led by Bruce Gordon, WASH Coordinator, WHO. He introduced the topic drawing on a recent WHO report, titled "Microplastics in drinking-water," noting the technical report had received unprecedented media attention. In wrapping up after the discussion, he said participants had focused on health assessment and environmental concerns. He stressed that, while many research gaps exist regarding plastics and microplastics, microplastics can be used to shine a light on water and sanitation issues. He concluded that people care about what goes into their body and into the environment, and that the UN must be able to react promptly to new findings.



Open Space discussion on the GWP strategy and research policy and practice

## Rules of Open Space

WHOEVER COMES ARE THE RIGHT PEOPLE  
WHENEVER IT STARTS IS THE RIGHT TIME  
WHENEVER IT ENDS IS THE RIGHT TIME  
WHATEVER HAPPENS IS THE ONLY THING THAT COULD HAVE  
HAPPENED



Guidelines used during the Open Space discussions

Group 2 looked at country capacity for SDG monitoring and was led by Graham Alabaster, Chief of Section, Urban Basic Services, UN-Habitat. He explained his group would investigate existing opportunities to tap into resources and noted the importance of monitoring for decision-making. Recapping group discussions, he stressed the need to: have a combination of solutions; be mindful that many countries have systems in place for collecting and reporting data; and use available data and adapt methodologies accordingly. He further noted that the discussions had underscored the importance of data at the grassroots level, and stressed the need to work with utilities and academia to build bridges between formal statistical monitoring and other data. The group concluded that while data is often available, it is not in the public domain.

Group 3 discussed UN-Water activities on gender and women and was headed by Boleslawa (Lasha) Witmer, Steering Committee Member, Women for Water Partnership (WfWP), and Mariet Verhoef-Cohen, WfWP President. Witmer noted that bringing in a gender perspective is often an afterthought in many projects and that there is space to provide better guidance on water and sanitation and women's participation. She highlighted that the group would discuss a potential new initiative within UN-Water so that the topic of gender becomes less of an *ad hoc* add on at the end of projects. Reporting back on discussions, Witmer concluded that all UN agencies have gender mainstreaming policies, yet many are outdated and often lack a direct link to water and sanitation. The group thus proposed reinstating an inter-agency group on water and women or creating a new task force. It suggested bringing together those in the agencies that work at the crossroads of water, sanitation and gender to develop guidelines for gender and women's participation on the ground. In closing, Witmer noted that SDG 5 (gender equality) is not only about gender, but also about equality and women's empowerment.

Group 4 pondered preparations for the 2021 and 2023 high-level water meetings, and was led by Anthony Slatyer, Special Adviser on Water, Australia, and Rockaya Aidara, Acting Head, Global Policy Advocacy Innovation Unit, Water Supply and

Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC). In introducing the topic, Slatyer proposed a Chatham House discussion on participants' wishes as outcomes from those meetings. Reporting back, the co-leaders explained that participants stressed the need for a high-level meaningful process that would result in useful outcomes for SDG 6 at the national level. They discussed the need to develop a roadmap for these meetings to ensure that preparations are multi-stakeholder and include marginalized stakeholder groups in particular, and to draw on other processes, such as the World Water Forum, to bring voices that might otherwise not be heard in high-level UN processes. Participants also stressed the importance of reporting back on progress.

Group 5 addressed the GWP strategy, as well as research policy and practice, and was led by Joshua Newton, Senior Network Officer, GWP, and Robert Burtscher, Liaison and Stakeholder Engagement, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA). They noted the group would look at the GWP strategy and how to engage further with UN-Water Partners. They highlighted the wealth of research from a development practitioner point of view, and the need to transform it into practice. Reporting back on discussions, Burtscher said that the starting point for the discussions was that research policy and practice are parallel worlds, underscoring that, in research, it is "publish or perish." The group addressed research drivers, such as grant availability and funding channels, and whether to "have a strategy or be strategic," with many agreeing on the latter. Discussions also focused on where research questions were coming from, be it research journal editors or stakeholders that are research work partners. On implementing research driven solutions, from a researcher's point of view, he cautioned against underestimating the risks of offering solutions that only work on paper.

### **Roadmap to the UN-Water Strategy to 2030**

UN-Water Chair Hougbo introduced discussion of this agenda item. Federico Properzi, UN-Water Chief Technical Adviser, identified several key defining elements on the global landscape that will shape global water policy opportunities in the coming decade, including: the Water Action Decade; UN reform; increased attention to the water, peace and security nexus; the call for stronger global structures for water; and global policy frameworks. He said the 2030 strategy should build on the current one, but that it should also ensure that UN-Water continues to be at the forefront of issues and adds value to the UN system to support Member States to deliver on intergovernmental commitments.

During the discussion, participants offered topics that the strategy could incorporate, including links between water and human rights, and with peace and security. A speaker recommended that UN-Water should manage the process leading to the 2023 high-level meeting. Participants also suggested thinking about how UN-Water could: be more agile in addressing critical emerging issues; ensure that UN-Water facilitates communication across organizations; engage religious groups that are focused on environmental issues, and local-level authorities and youth; and equip the UN Secretary-General with the tools to put water issues on the international stage.

**Decision:** The SPMs request the Management Team to draft the UN-Water Strategy to 2030 to be discussed at the 32nd UN-Water Meeting. The drafting process will include consultations

with UN-Water Members and Partners and other relevant stakeholders as necessary.

### **Global Campaigns**

**Report on World Water Day and WWDR 2019 on Leaving No One Behind and Update on Planning for World Toilet Day 2019:** Rio Hada, Team Leader, Economic and Social Rights, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, reported on World Water Day 2019 and planning for World Toilet Day 2019. He noted the theme “Leaving no one behind” and said a record number of agencies have joined in the campaigns. He emphasized the need to put the spotlight on people that are currently left behind and to increase access to safe sanitation, and said a lack of sanitation effectively leaves people behind. Overall, he reported strong political and public engagement, including at sub-national levels, as well as online participation. Quantified in website visits and factsheet downloads.

For World Toilet Day 2019, he underscored how the conversation had evolved over time, from “sanitation is a problem and a taboo” in 2014 to “sanitation is a development issue” in 2016, for instance. He noted that toilets can be dignity protectors and life savers, and drew attention to numerous events that were organized around the world to encourage people to take action to make a difference on the ground, and to put a human face to sanitation problems. He called for a continued focus on addressing taboo and stigma around toilets and sanitation, particularly for sanitation workers. In closing, he commended these two Days as illustrating the great value of UN-Water to speak with one voice.

Michela Miletto, Deputy Coordinator, World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP), UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), reported on WWDR 2019 on Leaving No One Behind, noting that the first WWDR was published in 2003. She described the 2019 report launch in Geneva in March 2019 and the 30+ complementary events that took place around the world and were organized by national institutions and field offices. She called attention to the significant media coverage the report had received, with some 400 news articles published, signaling an increase in visibility every year. Digitally, she quantified over 37,000 page views in March, 48,000 report downloads since March, and the distribution of over 2000 hard copies plus hundreds of USB keys.

**Decision:** UN-Water Members and Partners are encouraged to feature the WWDR and related materials on their institutional websites and to add the WWDR in their resources and publications sections with a permanent link to UNESCO’s server.

**Update on Planning for World Water Day and the WWDR 2020 on Water and Climate Change:** Sonja Koeppel, UNECE, Co-Coordinator of the UN-Water Expert Group on Water and Climate Change, introduced this agenda item.

Anil Mishra, UNESCO, Co-Coordinator of the UN-Water Expert Group on Water and Climate Change, addressed World Water Day preparations for 2020. He noted that consultations had started and that the policy brief is in its final stages of preparation. He explained that World Water Day 2020 events would take place in Geneva, Switzerland, and at the Expo 2020 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and that youth engagement was strongly encouraged. He drew attention to a dedicated event during Stockholm World Water Week in Sweden.

Michela Miletto, Deputy Coordinator, WWAP, UNESCO, addressed the WWDR 2020 production process, highlighting the deadlines for contributions on revised text as well as the subsequent milestones prior to printing in February 2020. She

drew attention to the WWDR 2021 Development Workshop on valuing water that will take place on 19-20 September 2019, in the WWAP secretariat in Perugia, Italy.

**Decision:** The SPMs approve the workplan, budget and timeline for the 2020 World Water Day campaign.

**Selection of Theme for World Toilet Day 2020:** Bruce Gordon, WASH Coordinator, WHO, presented options for the theme of World Toilet Day 2020: “Sustainable Sanitation and Climate Change” or “WASH for Health Care Facilities.”

Following a discussion about the possibilities for issues that could be linked to the theme and who might lead the task force, participants selected “Sustainable Sanitation and Climate Change” as the theme. The Expert Group on Water and Climate Change was designated to coordinate the campaign.

**Decision:** The SPMs decide that the theme of the 2020 World Toilet Day campaign will be “Sustainable Sanitation and Climate Change” and designate the Expert Group on Water and Climate Change to coordinate the campaign.

### **Future Events**

UN-Water Chair Hougbo moderated the discussion on upcoming events related to water and sanitation of relevance to UN-Water Members and Partners.

Participants took note of plans for the UN-Water Vice-Chair to attend COP 14 to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), which is meeting in New Delhi, India, from 2-13 September 2019, and for a side event to be held there.

Balázs Heinecz, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Hungary, reviewed the objectives of the upcoming Budapest Water Summit, which will convene from 15-17 October 2019, under the theme “Preventing Water Crises.” During the discussion, a participant complimented the outcome document from the 2016 Budapest Water Summit and suggested engaging youth in the meeting.

Nicolas Franke, Special Assistant to the UN-Water Secretary, highlighted that UN DESA organizes an annual mayors’ forum to provide a platform for policy sharing and the exchange of best practices. He said the 2019 International Mayors Forum may take place in Guayaquil, Ecuador, from 12-15 November 2019. During the discussion, a participant noted that this meeting will overlap with the 6th United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) Congress, which also involves mayors.

Eddy Moors, IHE Delft Institute for Water Education, discussed the 6th International Symposium on Knowledge and Capacity for the Water Sector, which will consider the theme “From Capacity Development to Implementation Science,” in Delft, the Netherlands, from 27-29 May 2020. The gathering will address “implementation science in the water sector.”

Lukmon Ismatov, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tajikistan, reviewed planning for the International High-Level Conference on the International Decade for Action, which will consider the theme “Catalyzing water action and partnership at the local, national, regional and global levels,” and will take place in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, in 2020. He noted that the theme of the conference was set in the Dushanbe Declaration, which was adopted in 2018, and said an international advisory committee and “Friends of Water” group at UN Headquarters in New York are involved in planning for the conference.

Leo Heller, Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation, highlighted that 2020 is the 10th anniversary of the resolution on water and human rights (Resolution 64/292 on the human right to water and sanitation), and suggested making efforts to mark the milestone. Amanda Loeffen, WaterLex, called

attention to an event WaterLex is organizing on the theme of “Leaving No One Behind” in the context of climate change and water.

Caridad Canales, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat, provided an update on planning for CBD COP 15, which will seek to adopt a post-2020 global biodiversity framework. In a video presentation, she noted that the exact dates for the October 2020 COP would be determined in the next few months. She explained that three meetings of an open-ended working group would prepare for the COP, and that meetings of the CBD subsidiary bodies would provide additional opportunities to inform the post-2020 framework.

Participants discussed options to develop inputs to the process of developing the post-2020 framework or to create a task force on the topic, agreeing to the former.

**Decision:** The SPMs request the Expert Group on the 2030 Agenda to coordinate UN-Water’s official input to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework to be submitted to the CBD Executive Secretary by the UN-Water Chair no later than July 2020. The SPMs further decide to allocate up to USD 15,000 to support this initiative..

### **Decision on Date and Venue of Next Un-Water Meeting and Closing**

UN-Water Chair Hougbo introduced the decision on the date and venue of the next UN-Water Meeting and made closing remarks. One participant suggested rotating the location to other agencies. Participants agreed that the 32nd UN-Water Meeting will be hosted by IFAD from 28-29 January 2020, in Rome, Italy. Participants congratulated the UN-Water Chair for his recent reappointment by the UN Secretary-General for another two-year term.

UN-Water Chair Hougbo thanked Partners for their participation and closed the Open Session at 3:00 pm.

### **Upcoming Meetings**

**World Water Week 2019:** The 29th World Water Week, organized by SIWI and partners, will focus on the theme “Water for Society: Including All.” **dates:** 25-30 August 2019 **location:** Stockholm, Sweden **www:** <http://www.worldwaterweek.org/world-water-week-2019-water-for-society-including-all/>

**First Meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework:** This meeting will advance preparations for the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The negotiating process will culminate in the adoption of a post-2020 global biodiversity framework at the UN Biodiversity Conference in 2020. **dates:** 27-30 August 2019 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **www:** <https://www.cbd.int/conferences/post2020/wg2020-01/documents>

**UNCCD COP 14:** UNCCD COP 14 will address the theme “Restore Land to Sustain Life.” **dates:** 2-13 September 2019 **location:** New Delhi, India **e-mail:** [secretariat@unccd.int](mailto:secretariat@unccd.int) **www:** <https://www.unccd.int/conventionconference-parties-cop/cop14-2-13-september-new-delhi-india>

**Korea International Water Week 2019:** Korea International Water Week 2019 is organized by the Korea Water Forum, and hosted by the Ministries of Environment, and of Land, Infrastructure and Transport of the Republic of Korea, with Daegu Metropolitan City. **dates:** 4-7 September 2019

**location:** Daegu, Daegu-Gyeongbuk, Republic of Korea **www:** <https://www.kiww.org/fairDash.do?hl=ENG>

**Climate Action Summit 2019:** To boost ambition and accelerate actions to implement the Paris Agreement, UN Secretary-General António Guterres will host the 2019 Climate Action Summit on 23 September to meet the climate challenge. **date:** 23 September 2019 **location:** New York City, US

**www:** <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/>

**SDG Summit:** The HLPF will convene at the level of Heads of State and Government under the auspices of the UNGA. These meetings take place every four years, and the 2019 meeting will be the first since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs. **dates:** 24-25 September 2019 **location:** New York City, US **www:** <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgsummit>

**Budapest Water Summit 2019:** The Budapest Water Summit 2019 will convene under the patronage of Hungarian President János Áder, and will build on the results of the Summit’s 2016 and 2013 editions. **dates:** 15-17 October 2019 **location:** Budapest, Hungary **www:** <http://www.sie-see.org/en/calendar/budapest-water-summit-2019-2/>

**6th UCLG Congress: World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders:** Organized by UCLG, the 6th edition of the triennial UCLG Congress will be the first to coincide with the implementation phase of numerous global agendas, including the New Urban Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change. **dates:** 11-15 November 2019 **location:** Durban, South Africa **www:** <https://www.uclg.org/en/media/events/uclg-world-congress-and-world-council>

**International Mayors Forum:** This Forum will have a session on ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation in cities under current climate change scenarios. **dates:** 12-15 November 2019 **location:** Guayaquil, Ecuador

**World Toilet Day 2019:** The 2019 theme for this global awareness raising campaign is “Leaving No One Behind.” **date:** 19 November 2019 **location:** worldwide **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/events/toiletday/>

**Santiago Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP 25):** The Santiago Climate Change Conference will feature COP 25, the 15th meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP), and the second meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA), as well as meetings of the subsidiary bodies. The meeting will also be informed by the outcomes of, among others, the UN Climate Action Summit, and the three Regional Climate Weeks: Africa Climate Week held in March, Latin America and Caribbean Climate Week held in August, and Asia-Pacific Climate Week held in September. **dates:** 2-13 December 2019 **location:** Santiago, Chile **www:** <https://unfccc.int/santiago>

**32nd UN-Water Meeting:** This meeting will gather UN-Water Members and Partners to coordinate the UN’s approach to water and sanitation issues. **dates:** 28-29 January 2020 **location:** Rome, Italy **www:** <http://www.unwater.org>

**UN-Water Members**

(21 as of August 2018)

**United Nations Secretariat**

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)

United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR)

**Programmes and funds**

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

World Food Programme (WFP)

**Regional Commissions**

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC)

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA)

**Specialized agencies**

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

International Labour Organization (ILO)

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

The World Bank Group (WBG)

World Health Organization (WHO)

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

**Other entities**

United Nations University (UNU)

**United Nations related organizations**

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

**Conventions**

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

**UN-Water Partners**

(40 as of August 2018)

AquaFed

CDP

Center for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology (CAWST)

Conservation International

Gender and Water Alliance (GWA)

Global Water Partnership (GWP)

International Association for Hydro-Environment Engineering and Research (IAHR)

International Association for Water Law (AIDA)

International Association of Hydrogeologists (IAH)

International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS)

International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID)

International Groundwater Centre (IGRAC)

International Hydropower Association (IHA)

International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA)

International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

International Water and Sanitation Centre (IRC)

International Water Association (IWA)

International Water Management Institute (IWMI)

International Water Resources Association (IWRA)

Mandate of the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Disaster Risk Reduction and Water\*

Mandate of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation\*

Public Services International (PSI)

Ramsar Convention

Sanitation and Water for All\*

Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future

Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)

United Nations Global Compact\*

United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)

Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC)\*

Water.org

WaterAid

WaterLex

Women for Water Partnership (WfWP)

World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)

World Council of Civil Engineers (WCCE)

World Resources Institute (WRI)

World Water Council (WWC)

World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

World Youth Parliament for Water (WYPW)

\* Partner with Special Status