

32nd UN-Water Meeting: 28-29 January 2020

The 32nd UN-Water Meeting gathered the members, partners and observers for this UN interagency coordination mechanism to discuss joint initiatives, upcoming events, strategies, and work plans with the objective of improving the visibility, coherence and implementation of water and sanitation policy. Activities discussed during this meeting, which took place in Rome, Italy, from 28-29 January 2020, will contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with particular emphasis on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 (clean water and sanitation).

As highlighted in UN-Water Chair Gilbert Houngbo's closing remarks, the 32nd UN-Water Meeting was intense, with agenda items addressing the work programme for the coming biennium, the UN-Water 2030 Strategy, and input to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, which will extend to 2050. Meeting participants also discussed a proposed SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework in the context of the UN Secretary-General's recent call for a Decade of Action to deliver the 2030 Agenda. Planning for engaging at the country and regional levels was discussed in light of ongoing UN reforms. Participants were also briefed on the upcoming launch of the CEO Water Mandate's Water Resilience Pledge/Coalition.

The roadmap for upcoming UN high-level meetings that will take place in 2021 and 2023 was discussed. Opportunities to use a variety of forums, summits and other meetings taking place in the lead up to these events were highlighted as points during which the conversation and inputs could be shaped into a cohesive and comprehensive strategy to address important SDG 6 issues effectively and in a timely manner. UN-Water's Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6 and efforts to update monitoring and reporting in the lead up to these high-level meetings were also highlighted.

At the end of the second day of the two-day meeting, a speaker noted that "we are participating in a global change process," and noted the challenge and opportunity to ensure that upcoming events will feed into one another. Other discussions regarding the audience for various initiatives and how to reach them to effect change illustrated participants' recognition of the urgency of setting SDG 6 into motion. The SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework, which will include a commitment platform for the

acceleration of the Decade of Action, strengthened cross-sectoral approaches using the six entry points for transformative action identified in the Global Sustainable Development Report 2019, and better coordination and delivery at the country level, was highlighted as a key initiative to help advance efforts to achieve clean water and sanitation for all.

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 32nd UN-Water Meeting, representing the UN Secretariat and UN agencies, funds, programmes and other entities, multilateral environmental agreements, and civil society organizations. An additional 24 observers from governments and other organizations also attended. Participants agreed that the 33rd UN-Water meeting would convene in August 2020 in Stockholm, Sweden.

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.

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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.

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 and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. 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 Integrated Monitoring Initiative 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 Members of UN-Water. 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 the highest operational decision-making body of UN-Water.

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

Report from 32nd UN-Water Meeting

On Tuesday, 28 January 2020, Gilbert Houngbo, 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 the agenda was very full and looked forward to participants' engagement on the agenda items.

Selected Reports and Progress Updates

Progress reports for information: UN-Water Chair Houngbo introduced the selected reports and progress updates agenda item, drawing attention to reports that were submitted for the information of UN-Water's Members and Partners.

Joakim Harlin, UNEP, reported on behalf of the Expert Group on Water Quality and Wastewater. He noted that the World Water Quality Alliance has been established and invited all to participate in the Alliance.

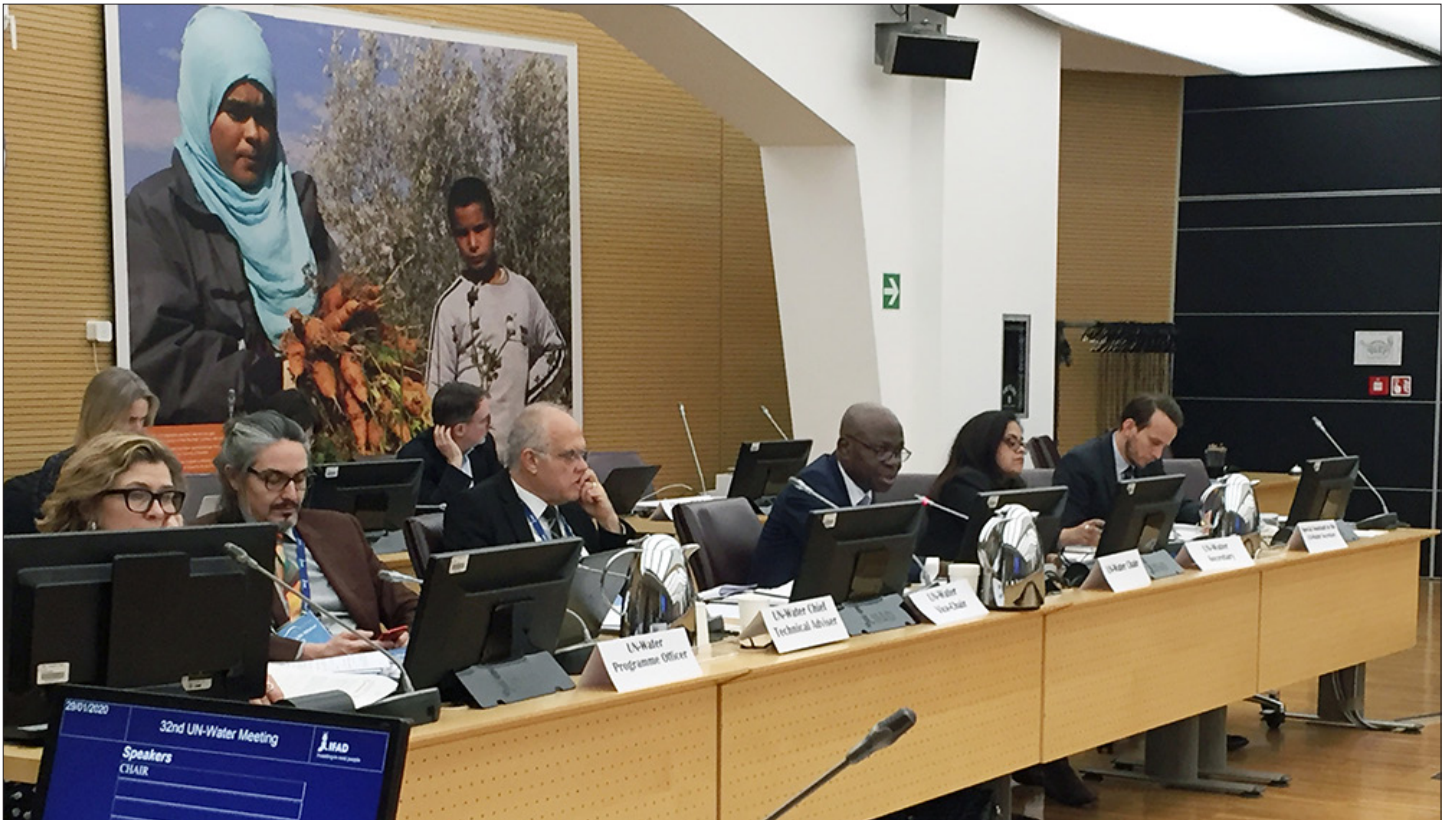
Sasha Koo-Oshima, FAO, said the Expert Group on Water Scarcity is developing a UN-Water Analytical Brief on Water Efficiency and expects to launch it at World Water Week 2020.

A report from the Expert Group on Drinking-Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) highlighted activities in 2019 related to WASH in health care facilities, including a resolution (WHA72.7) approved at the 2019 World Health Assembly calling on countries to establish baselines and set targets, among other actions.

Way forward to accelerate progress on SDG 6 implementation: Joakim Harlin, as Chair of the Expert Group on the 2030 Agenda, noted that most SDG targets are off track and highlighted that action during the next few years will be critical to the 2030 Agenda's success. In light of this challenge, he noted that the UN Secretary-General has just launched a Decade of Action. He recalled that, based on a decision taken by the 31st UN-Water Meeting, the Expert Group on the 2030 Agenda was tasked to prepare a UN Chief Executives Board (CEB) call/appeal/communiqué on water and sanitation. Harlin reported that the resulting proposed initiative is the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework.

Federico Properzi, UN-Water Chief Technical Adviser, introduced the three components in the concept note for the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework, which include: a commitment platform for the acceleration of the Decade of Action; strengthened cross-sectoral approaches using the six entry points for transformative action identified in the Global Sustainable Development Report 2019; and better coordination and delivery at the country level. He emphasized the need to reach out to other "policy tables" to find where decisions are taken on water and sanitation and to provide input to those decisions.

During the discussion, speakers noted the importance of the outreach component and asked what benchmarks would be used to measure progress. One speaker noted that raising awareness and implementation are very different and suggested focusing on doing one of the three objectives well. A focus on the themes of "leave no one behind," water efficiency and agriculture, environmental rehabilitation, and wastewater reuse was suggested, with several speakers also highlighting the



Dais during the closing session (L-R) **Leanne Burney**, UN-Water; **Federico Properzi**, UN-Water; **Olcay Unver**, UN-Water Vice-Chair; **Gilbert Hougbo**, UN-Water Chair; **Madhushree Chatterjee**, UN-Water Secretary; and **Nicolas Franke**, Special Assistant to the UN-Water Secretary

importance of better data to support the 2030 Agenda. Questions regarding the role of the private sector in the SDG 6 Acceleration Framework and how other stakeholders at the national level would be engaged were raised.

UN-Water Members and Partners decided to commit to develop the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework with the aim of launching it at the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) in July 2020.

Briefing on the 2020 launch of the CEO Water Mandate's Water Resilience Pledge/Coalition: Jason Morrison, UN Global Compact's CEO Water Mandate, presented plans to launch a major campaign in 2020 centered around a new Water Resilience Pledge, effectively creating a time bound and measurable global ambition for water that will translate into collective action initiatives in water stressed basins around the world. He said the campaign will be launched on World Water Day, which will be celebrated on 23 March 2020. He noted that the work of the Water Resilience Pledge/Coalition will build on UN Compact's work to familiarize the private sector in water stewardship best practices, and will advance its work to assist leading companies in setting site-level water targets that reflect the local context. The campaign will focus on moving water up the priority ladder for the business community by highlighting connections between climate and water, among other linkages.

Morrison said the Water Mandate's Water Resilience Pledge/Coalition seeks to ignite a CEO-driven movement of the most influential companies in the world to elevate water to the top of

the global business agenda. He said a water resilience pledge was preliminarily drafted at the 2020 World Economic Forum. The draft calls for collective action by 2050 to, *inter alia*: achieving a measurable and net positive impact in water-stressed basin on availability, quality, and accessibility through industry-leading water operations and basins initiatives; developing, implementing and enabling impact-based water resilience practices across 100% of the value chain and raising the global ambition of water resilience through public and corporate outreach.

Morrison underscored that these pledges should be measurable and time-bound and stated that the Global Compact is partnering with the World Resources Institute and The Nature Conservancy to this end. He invited UN agencies and partners to support the initiative by identifying and addressing urgent water-stressed regions, key metrics, supplier policies, and how best to support companies in this endeavor.

During the discussion, participants applauded the initiative and raised questions about approaches to achieve net water impact, including how the water footprint can be reduced by addressing the supply chain or perhaps broadening the scope beyond supply to cover other activities and operations that also entail an impact on water resources. Other issues raised referred to linkages with human rights and the involvement of local authorities.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the SPMs welcomed the UN Global Compact's efforts to accelerate action on water and sanitation in the business community including through the CEO Water Mandate's Water Resilience Pledge and agreed to support

the World Water Day launch of the CEO Water Mandate's Water Resilience Coalition at UN Headquarters on 23 March.

Update on the process to the 2021 and 2023 high-level events: Alexander Trepelkov, Officer-in-Charge, Division for SDGs, UN Department of Economic Affairs (UN DESA), and Vladimir Smakhtin, UN University Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU – INWEH), recalled the resolution adopted by the UNGA in 2018 on the midterm review of the implementation of the Water Action Decade, which calls for two UN high-level meetings on water and sanitation: a one-day event to be convened by the President of the General Assembly to promote the implementation of water-related Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda in 2021; and a “UN Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action” in 2023.

They reported progress on the preparation of these events, including the organization of a UNGA side event on 13 November 2019, at UN Headquarters in New York, and yielded recommendations to assign two co-facilitator countries to guide the process. In addition, participants indicated that, *inter alia*: the theme of World Water Day 2023 should be relevant to the Water Action Decade and the 2023 Conference; an updated evidence base for the 2023 Conference could be coordinated by UN-Water in the form of a follow up SDG 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation; and the regional preparatory process should include the regional commissions.

Trepelkov reported that the mandate for the Task Force on Water Action Decade Implementation has to be renewed every two years and said it would be ideal if the UN-Water Chair could continue to lead the task force.

During the discussion, participants took note of the progress being made towards the Water Action Decade and emphasized that the 2021 and 2023 landmark events need to be informed by substantive content, which means that UN-Water agencies should be given the necessary time to conduct adequate consultations.

Update on 2020 country level engagement: Marianne Kjellén, Senior Water Advisor, UN Development Programme (UNDP), said activities on this agenda item had been coordinated with UNICEF. She said UN-Water's offer to country teams was being distributed though the UN Development Coordination Office this month. The country teams are being informed that UN-Water can provide support on data and monitoring, connecting to expertise, technical assistance and support from UN-Water members and Partners, and support for country-level advocacy on all water and sanitation-related issues. Kjellén said the UN-Water Technical Advisory Unit will respond to requests and explore them with the Resident Coordinator's Office, and responses will be monitored.

During the discussion, speakers suggested that UN-Water might want to proactively contact countries who are preparing their common country analyses and encourage them to include water-related challenges in them. The value of keeping the UN-Water inventory updated was noted, and the need to keep

the Resident Coordinators at the center of all coordination was stressed.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the SPMs approved the workplan of the Task Force on Country Level Engagement and UN-Water Members and Partners agreed to support the engagement at the country level by helping raise awareness of the offer that UN-Water is making and responding to requests from countries, through the Resident Coordinators.

Expert Group on Regional-Level Coordination Terms of Reference (TOR): Carol Chouchani Cherfane, UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, highlighted that, as part of the regional-level reforms of the UN development system, an agreement was reached in December 2019 that: a Regional Collaboration Platform (RCP) would be established in each of the five UN regions; the RCP would provide a platform for collaboration for all the UN agencies and organizations active in that region; and each RCP could set up Issue-based Coalitions on region-specific priority issues identified by the members of each RCP.

Cherfane said the TOR for the Expert Group were drafted following this agreement. Cherfane highlighted in particular the opportunity for UN-Water to ensure that water and sanitation issues are presented for inclusion in the Issue-based Coalitions on region-specific priority issues.

The SPMs approved the TOR and invited the Expert Group to submit a two-year work plan to the 33rd UN-Water Meeting.

Update on the UN-Water Analytical Brief on Unconventional Water Resources: Vladimir Smakhtin, UNU – INWEH, updated participants on the content and status of the UN-Water Analytical Brief on Unconventional Water Resources. The analytical brief is based on the following objectives: highlight the linkages of unconventional water resources with SDG 6 and other water-related SDGs; evaluate the potential of unconventional water resources as a water augmentation resource in water-scarce areas; address policies and institutions, economics, education and capacity building, and community participation and gender aspects; and provide insight into the barriers and associated response options to facilitate the use of unconventional water resources.

Smakhtin reported that UNU-INWEH organized an expert consultation meeting on 13 November 2019, to: discuss the potential of unconventional water resources as a source of water augmentation at different scales; address the environmental and economic trade-offs of harnessing the potential of unconventional water resources and financial instruments to accelerate their use; and provide insight into the barriers and associated options to facilitate the use of unconventional water resources. With the input of this expert meeting, a first draft of the analytical brief was completed, updated with comments from meeting participants, and shared with the Task Force. He said a final version of the analytical brief is expected by March 2020.

In the ensuing discussion, participants highlighted the need to include water and sanitation as part of the circular economy.

Questions were asked regarding follow-up actions or activities to be included in the brief. A speaker also suggested producing an Atlas of unconventional water resources. At the conclusion of the discussion, the SPMs acknowledged the progress made by the Task Force to produce the Analytical Brief on Unconventional Water Resources and asked the Task Force to work with the UN-Water Technical Assistance Unit (TAU) to launch the report and disseminate the results.

Discussion on the draft UN-Water 2030 Strategy:

Federico Properzi, UN-Water Chief Technical Adviser, noted that the 31st UN-Water Meeting had requested the UN-Water Management Team to draft the UN-Water Strategy to 2030, for discussion at the 32nd UN-Water Meeting. He indicated that broad consultations with UN-Members and Partners and other stakeholders had taken place and were incorporated into the draft UN-Water 2030 Strategy. Properzi noted that the consultations and analysis were focused on identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to advancing the water agenda. The 2030 Strategy presents UN-Water's vision, mission and three lines of work, and outlines ways through which UN-Water can fully realize its potential. He said the core strengths were referred to as the five "C's": convening power; consolidation of expertise from within and outside the UN; catalyzing action on water and sanitation issues and accelerating progress on SDG 6 during the Decade of Action to deliver the SDG by 2030; connecting by strengthening integrated cross-sectoral approaches to maximize synergies; and coordinating to ensure synergies and avoid duplication of efforts between actors.

In the ensuing discussion, participants commended the work of the UN-Water TAU in conducting the consultations, producing a summary and preparing a preliminary draft of the strategy so efficiently. Several participants said the strategy should clearly demonstrate how UN-Water will make a contribution to changes in behavior leading to expected outcomes and achievements by 2030. Speakers suggested that the theory of change should be aligned with the three achievement areas identified by the strategy, i.e., UN-Water is successful delivering as one, UN-Water is successful in supporting UN system reform and action, and UN-Water is successful in accelerating progress on SDG 6 and other water and sanitation related global targets. One speaker said the strategy should address the needs of vulnerable populations, underscoring the theme of "leave no one behind." A suggestion was also made to review the implementation of the strategy more frequently than every five years. At the conclusion of the discussion, the SPMs requested the Management Team to incorporate comments received on the UN-Water 2030 Strategy and to share the final draft with the SPMs for their approval.

Approval of the UN-Water Work Programme 2020-2021:

The Program of Work 2020-2021 was introduced by Federico Properzi, UN-Water Chief Technical Adviser, who noted that, as the Work Programme 2018-2019 has ended, a draft Result Matrix, Structure, Indicative Budget, and narrative Work Programme for 2020-2021 had been developed by the UN-Water Management Team, for discussion and approval by the 32nd

UN-Water Meeting. He clarified that the UN-Water activities were organized along UN-Water's expected results in 2020-2021, including: informing policies and addressing emerging issues; supporting monitoring and reporting on water and sanitation; building knowledge and inspiring people to take action; and effective management of efforts aimed at improved coordination and coherence among UN-Water Members and Partners at all levels. He said an additional area of work was added to update a guidance note on transboundary water issues.

During the discussion, one participant raised concerns that the gender-water linkage was not adequately reflected in the draft of the Strategy, particularly with regards to women from indigenous groups. Another participant sought clarification on the narrative and connection between three lines of work and the four results areas. She also called for more explicit references to support at the country level and noted that the UN-Water inventory should be updated more regularly. Properzi said the Results Matrix was a preliminary draft and the connection between the lines of work and the results areas would be more explicit once it is finalized.

Monitoring and Reporting

Integrated Monitoring Initiative: Kelly Ann Naylor, UNICEF, presented the World Health Organization (WHO)/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme Outputs from 2019, noting that two big reports were released on WASH in health care facilities. She said the project has also focused on filling data gaps, helping approximately 20 countries per year to do household surveys to generate baseline data. Plans for 2020 include update reports on schools and health care facilities, and an expert group meeting on monitoring Safe Management of On-Site Sanitation to develop guidance on how countries can address data gaps on this issue.

Bruce Gordon, WHO, provided an update on the UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS) 2019 report, noting that the overall theme of this report was national WASH systems with a specific focus on national policies, plans and targets. He said WHO promoted the report and its findings via regional workshops in India, Jordan and Uganda. Gordon noted that next steps include finalizing country and external support agency highlights, submitting data and stories to the UN Statistics Division on SDG targets 6.a (international cooperation and capacity building) and 6.b (participation of local communities).

William Reidhead, UN-Water, said the UN-Water Integrated Monitoring Initiative is now in Phase 2, which covers the period between 2019-2022. He reported that activities in 2020 will include a global data drive and capacity building, activities in 2021 will include validation, analysis and progress reporting, and activities in 2022 will include input to high-level processes. He said key external events include UN Statistics Division's annual data requests, the HLPF, the 2021 and 2023 UN high-level events, and regional and global meetings in 2022 on the preparatory process for the mid-term review of the Water Action Decade.

For an outreach strategy, he highlighted that the Initiative's five key audiences are national technical experts, national policy- and decision-makers and stakeholders, regional organizations, international organizations, and global platforms. For each of the audiences, strategic behavioral changes have been identified and key messages focus on what might bring about the desired behavioral change. He also highlighted the need for coordinated outreach, and attention to the products that should be developed to support high-level meetings.

UN-Water technical advice on freshwater-biodiversity linkages to inform the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework: Joakim Harlin noted that, in October 2020, the post-2020 global biodiversity framework will be adopted. As an input to the negotiation process on this framework, which is taking place under the auspices of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Expert Group on the 2030 Agenda was tasked with coordinating the UN-Water official input to the negotiations. Harlin reported that the Expert Group reviewed the CBD's January 6 draft post-2020 global biodiversity framework and prepared a technical advice document. He said comments on the technical advice document should be submitted by 7 February, following which the input will be submitted to the CBD process.

Caridad Canales, CBD Secretariat, via telecommunication, said a similar input process is planned for the third post-2020 Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) in July 2020.

During the discussion, speakers highlighted the challenges to address invasive alien species and noted that the International Maritime Organization, which addresses ballast waters, is not a UN-Water Member. Another speaker said phosphorous should be addressed in addition to nitrogen. Speakers also emphasized the value of the input as a joint UN-Water document. The SPMs agreed to approve the main recommendations in the draft version of the UN-Water technical advice paper on freshwater-biodiversity linkages and to submit it to the CBD post-2020 OEWG chairs and delegations and the CBD Executive Secretary prior to the second meeting at the end of February.

Update on the UN World Water Development Reports (WWDRs) 2020 and 2021: Abou Amani, World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) acting coordinator, UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), reported on the drafting and publication schedules for the next two WWDRs. The 2020 WWDR is focused on water and climate change and is expected to be launched in March 2020. The 2021 WWDR is focused on "Valuing Water."

Global Campaigns

Report on World Toilet Day 2019 on "Leaving No One Behind": Rio Hada, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), reported on key highlights of 2019 World Toilet Day, including online engagement and a significant increase in the number of physical events, which jumped from 100 in 2018 to 800 in 2019. He noted that this trend could be partly attributed to the quality and accessibility of communication

materials produced by the UN "delivering as one." With the aim of leaving no one behind, he also reported on the launch, during World Toilet Day 2019, of a report and the organization of an exhibit showcasing the work of sanitation workers whose contribution is often overlooked. Hada also highlighted initiatives that were successful in terms of raising awareness and initiating a dialogue on sanitation issues, such as "the toilet is closed" initiative, where UN organizations were encouraged to post "closed" signs on their toilets to focus staff attention on others' lack of access to safely managed sanitation.

Update on planning for World Water Day 2020 on Water and Climate Change: Claudio Caponi, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), reported on progress towards the World Water Day 2020 campaign on the theme, "Water and Climate Change." He said the campaign links to the climate community, especially through the dissemination of the UN-Water Policy Brief on Climate Change and Water and a side event organized at the Chile/Madrid Climate Change Conference in December 2019. With the aim of increasing policy makers' understanding of the co-benefits to managing water and climate in a more coordinated and sustainable manner, he indicated that an event would take place to celebrate World Water Day in tandem with World Meteorological Day on 23 March 2020. He also reported that the event will be preceded by a youth day in Geneva on 20 March, and said UNICEF would take the lead on organizing a policy event at UN Headquarters in New York to celebrate World Water Day 2020.

Daniella Bostrom, UN-Water Communications Manager, emphasized that the link between water and climate change should be strengthened in the runup to the Glasgow Climate Change Conference in November 2020, and invited UN-Water members and partners to organize activities and events to this end. She emphasized that the messaging should center on defining the issue and making it clear to people why they should care and what they could do about it.

In the ensuing discussion, Water Aid indicated that, in the lead up to World Water Day 2020 and the Glasgow Climate Change Conference, it will convene a summit during which water will be discussed as a key adaptation response. The European Commission, FAO and Holy See also reported they are organizing events addressing water and climate change. World Water Council (WWC) encouraged using the hashtag #ClimateIsWater".

Creation of the Task Force on World Water Day 2021: Daniella Bostrom, UN-Water, invited UN-Water Members and Partners to become a part of the Task Force on World Water Day 2021, which is focused on the theme, "Valuing Water." She noted that the Task Force would provide strategic direction, develop campaign activities and organize events. The SPMs decided to create the Task Force on World Water Day 2021.

Global Groundwater Sustainability: A call for action: Abou Amani, World Water Assessment Programme, UNESCO, referred to a call for action drafted by a large number of scientists specialized in aquifer sustainability and said the call is meant

to raise awareness on the global importance of groundwater, encourage future international action-oriented initiatives and build momentum towards the 2022 World Water Day. He noted that the draft acknowledges the global role of groundwater in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Framework for Action on Groundwater Governance, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and said it also builds on previous declarations and statements. He emphasized that the call puts the spotlight on: global groundwater sustainability; adequate management of groundwater sustainability from local to global scales; and the need to invest in groundwater governance and management.

Preliminary proposal on Groundwater Summit 2022: Neno Kukuric, International Ground Water Centre (IGRAC), indicated that his center, along with other entities and UN agencies, wished to explore the possibility of organizing a Groundwater Summit as the UN-Water “pivot” event of the 2022 World Water Day campaign. He said the Groundwater Summit would highlight the role of groundwater in the broader socio-economic and environmental context and provide information on groundwater management and governance.

The SPMs requested IGRAC to coordinate with interested UN-Water Member and Partners to develop a concept note for the possible Groundwater Summit, to be discussed at the 33rd UN-Water Meeting.

Open Space Session

Neil Dhot, AquaFed, introduced participants to the Open Space Session and moderated the selection of Open Space discussion topics. He noted that an “Open Space” is a participant-led facilitation process in which participants suggest the topics to be discussed during the session and other participants join the topics they are most interested in. At the conclusion of the discussions, a representative from each group reported back on each group’s discussions.

Engineering Contributions to SDG 6: This group discussed how engineering can provide a bridge between the science and solutions on SDG 6. The group also noted that while engineering has become more inclusive of environmental concerns, it remains focused on physical rather than social and environmental aspects of development. The group reported that it decided to develop a proposal to produce a white paper on the role of engineers in achieving SDG 6.

Use of Disruptive Technology: This group first considered which disruptive technologies they would discuss and agreed to focus on the Internet of Things, Blockchain and related technologies, and remote sensing. The group then discussed how each organization represented in the group is using these technologies in the water sector and found that the technologies are already being used but it was unclear who is doing what or where, or their impact.

The group highlighted that while big data technologies are necessary, there are downfalls to this approach including



Open Space group on Use of Disruptive Technology

concerns about human rights issues, access to data, and protection of local knowledge systems. The group also discussed innovation hubs around technologies and “hydro hubs,” and suggested that UN-Water become more engaged in these types of issues. The group proposed creating a task force to look at disruptive technology and develop a paper or brief for presentation at an event in the near future, noting that these issues are moving fast.

The Water Resilience Pledge + Integrated Water

Resource Management (IWRM): This group followed up the discussion on the CEO Water Mandate’s Water Resilience Pledge/Coalition. The group highlighted two critical areas for the Pledge’s success: its uptake at the local level and connection to local governments and regional basin planning; and how it incorporates data and transparency, including how company performance is assessed and whether their commitments can be measured in a way that links to SDG 6 and national efforts.

Planning for the 2021 and 2023 UN high-level events: This group discussed the underlying dynamic for the high-level meetings in 2021 and 2023 and what their key outcomes should be. The group noted that while there is a lot of content on “what” to do to achieve SDG 6, questions remain over “how” to do it. They discussed the need to consolidate and integrate existing information rather than expand the agenda. Additional insights from this group included the need to learn from other politically sensitive sectors regarding how those sectors approach global policy making processes, and the need for input from national



Open Space group on The Water Resilience Pledge + IWRM



Open Space group on Planning for the 2021 and 2023 events

level experiences, particularly on barriers to progress and key actors.

UN at 75: The conversation on the world in 2045: This group focused on discussing areas highlighted by the UN Secretary-General in preparation for the UN's 75th anniversary. Participants said the concept of valuing water will be an issue on the agenda in 2045 and noted the importance that knowledge and governance will have in addressing this issue. The group also discussed the breakdown in trust between governments and between governments and people and suggested that the Secretary-General should address trust and participatory issues to address these challenges.

Upcoming Events

UN-Water Chair Hounbo moderated the discussion on upcoming events related to water and sanitation of relevance to UN-Water Members and Partners. Many of these events are included in the roadmap to the 2023 UN high-level event.

The Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) Finance Ministers' Meeting will take place in Washington DC, US, hosted by the World Bank in April 2020. SWA partners will present evidence and practical experiences to make the case for investing in WASH, and highlight the social and financial impact of such investment. The SPMs requested the Expert Group on WASH to draft a joint UN-Water statement to be presented to the ministers attending the SWA 2020 Finance Ministers' Meeting.

The International Water Resources Association (IWRA) will hold its XVII World Water Congress in Daegu, Republic of Korea, from 11-15 May 2020. The Congress will focus on "Foundations for Global Water Security and Resilience," with one theme to focus on "Building resilient systems for climate change and growing populations." A new feature of this Congress will be the inclusion of "World Water Envoys" – youth representatives who will discuss the water challenges they face in their own communities. Korea International Water Week 2020 will take place in conjunction with the Congress, from 11-13 May.

The 2020 UN Ocean Conference will take place in Lisbon, Portugal, from 2-6 June 2020. This event will be co-hosted and co-chaired by Kenya and Portugal. A preparatory meeting

will take place from 4-5 February 2020, at UN Headquarters in New York, US. The preparatory meeting will consider themes for interactive dialogues and elements for the declaration to be adopted at the conference.

The "2nd International High-Level Conference on International Decade for Action, 'Water for Sustainable Development,' 2018-2028," will take place in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, from 18-20 June 2020. The theme for this meeting is, "Catalyzing water action and partnership at the local, national, regional and global levels". The Conference will include pre-conference forums focused on youth, women, civil society organizations, local governments, and mountains.

The Commemoration of the 10-year anniversary of the recognition of the human right to water and sanitation will take place on the margins of the HLPF in New York, US, in July 2020. The SPMs decided to co-sponsor a multistakeholder event led by the Special Rapporteur and OHCHR commemorating the 10-year anniversary. The SPMs also decided to include in the next UN-Water Meeting a discussion on a roadmap for promotion of the human right to water and sanitation by UN-Water Members and asked the Expert Group on WASH to develop a draft roadmap with guidance from OHCHR and the Special Rapporteur for consideration at the 33rd UN-Water Meeting.

The 2020 World Water Week will take place in Stockholm, Sweden, from 23-28 August 2020, and will focus on climate change and accelerating action.

The 2nd Asia International Water Week (AIWW) will take place in Bali, Indonesia, from 12-15 October 2020. This event is organized by the Asia Water Council and will involve four main themes: Asia water issues (thematic process), Asia to the World Statement (political and regional process), Water project business forum, and a citizens' forum and exhibition.

The 4th Asia-Pacific Water Summit will take place in Kumamoto City, Japan, from 19-20 October 2020. This event is organized by the Asia-Pacific Water Forum Secretariat and will bring together heads of state and government to focus on the theme, "Water for Sustainable Development: Best practices and the next generation."

The 9th World Water Forum will take place in Dakar, Senegal, in March 2021. This event is organized in coordination with all of Africa and along with the WWC, and will focus on the theme, "Water Security for Peace and Development." This event will include three components: a multistakeholder platform; a Summit with heads of state and government and major international institutions; and the Dakar 2021 Initiative.

Meeting Closing

Participants at the UN-Water Meeting agreed that the 33rd UN-Water Meeting will take place from 21-22 August 2020, in Stockholm, Sweden.

In concluding remarks, UN-Water Chair Hounbo highlighted that participants had discussed a large number of significant water and sanitation initiatives, including the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework, UN-Water's offer for country-level

engagement, the upcoming launch of the launch of the CEO Water Mandate's Water Resilience Pledge/Coalition, planning for identifying ways to engage with regional cooperation, monitoring and reporting projects, and key upcoming events to continue the conversation. He said the meeting had been "intense" and thanked participants for their engagement and closed the meeting at 3:25 pm.

Upcoming Meetings

Preparatory Meeting for the UN Ocean Conference:

This meeting is part of the preparatory process to the 2020 UN Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 (UN Ocean Conference). **dates:** 4-5 February 2020 **location:** New York City, US **www:** <https://www.un.org/en/oceanconference>

Second 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 October 2020. **dates:** TBD **location:** TBD **www:** <https://www.cbd.int/conferences/post2020/wg2020-02/documents>

World Water Day 2022: World Water Day 2022 is marked annually on 22 March. In 2022, the "pivot" event to celebrate this date will take place on 23 March and will address water and climate change and how the two are inextricably linked. **dates:** 23 March 2020 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **www:** <https://www.worldwaterday.org>

Global Water Summit: This event will serve as a high-level knowledge platform that provides access to expert contributions, ideas and intelligence on water issues, provides networking opportunities and market insights. **dates:** 29-31 March 2020 **location:** Madrid, Spain **www:** <https://www.watermeetsmoney.com>

XVII World Water Congress: The International Water Resources Association (IWRA) will organize this event, which will focus on "Foundations for Global Water Security and Resilience." Korea International Water Week 2020 will take place in conjunction with the Congress, from 11-13 May. **dates:** 11-15 May 2020 **location:** Daegu, Republic of Korea **www:** <http://www.worldwatercongress.com/>

UN Ocean Conference: The 2020 UN Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 is intended to propel science-based innovative solutions aimed at starting a new chapter of global ocean action. **dates:** 2-6 June 2020 **location:** Lisbon, Portugal **www:** <https://www.un.org/en/oceanconference>

Bonn Climate Change Conference: During this event, the 52nd session of the UNFCCC subsidiary bodies for implementation (SBI) and scientific and technical advice (SBSTTA) will convene. **dates:** 1-11 June 2020 **location:** Bonn,

Germany **www:** <https://unfccc.int/event/bonn-climate-change-conference-june-2020>

2nd International High-Level Conference on the Water

Action Decade: The theme for this meeting is, "Catalyzing water action and partnership at the local, national, regional and global levels." **dates:** 18-20 June 2020 **location:** Dushanbe, Tajikistan **www:** <https://wsdconf2018.org/>

UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF): This forum follows-up and reviews the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The focus of the forum in 2020 will be accelerated action and transformative pathways realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development. The Commemoration of the 10-year anniversary of the recognition of the human right to water and sanitation will take place on the margins of the HLPF. **dates:** 7-16 July 2020 **www:** <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2020>

Third 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 October 2020. **dates:** 27-31 July 2020 (TBC) **location:** Cali, Colombia **www:** <https://www.cbd.int/process/>

33 UN-Water Meeting: This event will gather UN-Water Members and Partners to coordinate the UN's approach to water and sanitation issues. **dates:** 21-22 August **location:** Stockholm, Sweden **www:** <https://www.unwater.org>

World Water Week 2020: The 30th World Water Week, organized by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) and partners, will focus on the theme, "Water and Climate Change: Accelerating Action." **dates:** 23-28 August 2020 **location:** Stockholm, Sweden **www:** <https://www.worldwaterweek.org>



The 32nd Meeting of UN-Water took place at the headquarters of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

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)

UN 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 (WB)

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