



WATER ACTION DECADE
2018 - 2028

High-level Event on interlinkages between Water and Climate Action

Organized by the Permanent Mission of Tajikistan, Japan, Canada, Morocco, Mexico, Russia, Singapore, Switzerland and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and with the support of UN-Water

ECOSOC Chamber, United Nations Headquarters, New York

27 March 2019

Concept Note

Introduction

More than 2 billion people live in countries experiencing high water stress, and the situation will likely worsen as populations and demand for water grow, and as the effects of climate change intensify. Globally, 90% of disasters have been caused by floods, storms, droughts, and other weather-related events, which continue to intensify with climate change.

Recognizing the need to reinvigorate action and to halt this spreading water crisis, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted the resolution “International Decade (2018–2028) for Action – Water for Sustainable Development” (Water Action Decade). The Water Action Decade serves as a platform for countries and relevant stakeholders to discuss their major water-related challenges, possible solutions, to further cooperation, as well as to encourage partnership at all levels. During this 73rd session, the General Assembly adopted by consensus the resolution on the Midterm comprehensive review of this Water Action Decade. This calls for two high-level meetings on water and sanitation in 2021 and 2023, which are a greater focus on the sustainable development and integrated management of water resources for the achievement of social, economic and environmental objectives.

As water plays a pivotal role in how the world mitigates and adapts to the effects of climate change, including in the context of disaster risk reduction, this high-level event in the framework of the Water Action Decade, will highlight the potential and existing interlinkages between water and climate action while shining a light on sustainable approaches to water resource management for the achievement of climate objectives in the context of sustainable development.

The outcomes of this event will facilitate the implementation of the Water Action Decade raising the momentum produced by the World Water Day, further feeding into the high-level meeting organized by the President of the UN General Assembly on “Climate Protection for All” and looking toward the high-level meetings in 2021 and 2023.

Objectives

Based on the objectives for the Water Action Decade toward 2021 and 2023, aiming to serve as input to the high-level meeting on “Climate Protection for all” organized by the President of the General Assembly on 28 March, the event will:

1. Highlight the interlinkages between water and climate action, and the synergies between the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda.
2. Promote the adoption of integrated approaches to manage water and enhance climate action, including in the context of disaster risk reduction and health protection and so on.
3. Highlight means of implementation and lessons learned (such as capacity building, finance, and technology access).

Event Structure

- Opening segment to set the stage
- A first panel to allow Member States to share experiences related to water resource management and climate action mainly focused on interlinkages between the climate agenda and SDGs.
- A second panel will gather representatives of UN agencies, civil society (including international NGOs and representative of indigenous peoples), and International Financial Institutions to discuss the implementation of water-related targets in support of climate change adaptation and mitigation actions.
- Closing remarks

Participants will include High-Level Government representatives, the private sector, civil society, academia, and international organizations.

Draft Programme

10:00-10:30 Opening

10:30-11:30 Panel 1: Water and climate action

11:30-12:30 Panel 2: Means of Implementation

12:30-1:00 Closing