



SDG Business Forum Breakout Session

Untapped potential: Water Innovation to advance the SDGs

Wednesday, 23 September 2020, 11:00 - 12:00 EDT

Co-hosted by: UN-Water, UN DESA, and UN Global Compact CEO Water Mandate

Background

The current COVID-19 pandemic has exposed new and unexpected challenges for the world, some of which are further aggravated by persistent social and environmental issues. Challenges such as insufficient access to safe drinking water and safe sanitation increases vulnerability to the virus, which further stresses existing social and economic concerns in these communities. Sustainable business practices are being sidelined as companies struggle to manage the impacts of COVID-19, however it is imperative that sustainable development is brought to the forefront of business, especially in times of crisis. Evolving leadership has quickly recognized the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships in achieving the best possible solutions to immediate threats in their communities while also contributing to long-term sustainability of social, environmental and economic aspects, as seen in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals.

At this critical time, when ambition for all the SDGs must be raised, UN-Water and the Secretary-General launched the [SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework](#) during the High-Level Political Forum in July this year. A key accelerator in this Framework is leveraging and scaling up innovative technologies and practices at the country level. This can only happen through effective partnerships with the business sector that bridge UN frameworks with corporate innovations. The [Water Resilience Coalition](#) (WRC) is working in this space by elevating water stress to the top of the corporate agenda through innovative, data driven approaches to collective action in water-stressed basins.

As the largest and most globally representative UN convening of business leaders, the SDG Business Forum highlights companies that are using their influence as a positive agent of change in their local communities and across

the world. This breakout session will provide an opportunity for the panelists from UN agencies and the private sector to exchange insights on how they are addressing the current challenges and provide solutions for accelerating the progress towards SDG 6 and achieving sustainable developments.

This session will facilitate a dialogue among UN agencies driving the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework and companies who have pledged support for the Water Resilience Coalition to explore how innovations in direction operations, supply chain management, technology and governance practices can advance the 2030 Agenda. The conversation will highlight the ways innovation for water and sanitation are helping to manage the Covid-19 response in countries globally, alleviate water stress, and build long-term resiliency.

Agenda

11:00 – 11:05 Welcome and setting the stage

- Ms. Faduma Ali, OSCE and Water Youth Network

11:05 – 11:12 Accelerating innovation for water and sanitation: Sustainable Development Goal 6 Global Acceleration Framework

- Mr. Olcay Unver, UN-Water Vice-Chair

11:12– 11:55 Panel Discussion

Moderated by Mr. Jason Morrison, President of Pacific Institute and Head of UNGC CEO Water Mandate

- Ms. Aina Grobicki, Deputy Director for Adaptation at Green Climate Fund
- Ms. Kate Gibson, Global Director for Society, Diageo
- Mr. Eric Souberain, Vice President for Nature and Water Cycle and CEO of the Danone Ecosystem Fund
- Ms. Samantha Sims, Vice President for Environmental Sustainability and Product Stewardship, PVH Corp.

11:55 – 12:00 Closing Remarks

- Ms. Maria-Francesca Spatolisano, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs