



Economic Analysis and Policy Division  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
United Nations Secretariat  
New York, NY 10017

**Statement by Helga Flores Trejo, Head International Public Affairs at Bayer, on the UN Water Conference 2023**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This conference was the first UN water conference in almost 50 years. We could have not waited any longer: The water crisis is a dire reality for many people around the world – especially in vulnerable regions. As the planet warms up and the world population grows, this crisis will only get worse if we don't act now.

As Bayer, we want to play a leading role in promoting corporate water stewardship. We are convinced that companies can generate significant positive impact beyond their own operations and reach those who need it the most.

A good example is rice: Rice is responsible for up to 43% of the world's irrigation water withdrawals. At this conference, we committed to improving water use per kilogram of rice crop by 25% by 2030. We will do this by transforming rice-cropping systems for smallholder customers in the relevant regions where we operate.

This new commitment builds on the work that we have been doing for years. In 2021, we launched a project in India that helps smallholder farmers successfully cultivate direct-seeded rice – a form of rice that can reduce water



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Bayer AG

Kaiser-Wilhelm-Allee 1  
51368 Leverkusen  
Germany

[www.bayer.com](http://www.bayer.com)

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requirements by up to 40%. We will scale this programme and aim at reaching 2 million farmers by 2030.

It is our intention to make water an integral part of its business decisions and investments and develop a methodology to place a value on water.

These actions are aimed at promoting a water-resilient future. We encourage other companies to take similar action and collaborate to turn the tide in all industries. The Open Call for Water Action organised by the CEO Water Mandate offers an excellent opportunity for more joint water action.

We will continue our work on water and invite everyone to join us. We cannot wait another 50 years.