

UN 2023 WATER CONFERENCE SIDE EVENT WRITTEN STATEMENT

Multi-stakeholder Partnership Model: Global Citizenship Education for Clean Water and Cleaner Energy

The 2023 Water Conference Side Event held on March 23rd, 2023 aimed to address the widespread impact of the water crisis in regards to how we, as both individual citizens from all sectors of society and a variety of stakeholders, can contribute to the development of clean water and cleaner energy. With a focus on ensuring quality education for global citizenship, our event aimed to promote the empowerment of students to take action to improve people's lives and environments with the support of multi-stakeholders from the public and private sectors, academia and governments worldwide. Through this effort, IVECA and collaborators strive to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, especially in regard to the development of the economy as it pertains to our environment and solving inequalities.

Through our event, we connected stakeholders from various sectors of society. We were honored to host several UN Member State representatives, showing solidarity in the international effort to take action for clean water and energy. One of our panel members joined us from the Indian Ministry of Water Power, emphasizing the need for not only national calls to action, but also the importance of official-led campaigns to prevent further damage done to the environment and economy, inspiring citizens of each nation to take steps towards our shared goals.

Several NGOs who contributed to the event were also steadfast in their dedication to the achievement of the SDGs, including an educational foundation from India focused on increasing access to education, the reduction of plastic waste and fossil fuel emissions; while another from the Netherlands is dedicated to the removal of plastics in the ocean and preventing the future contribution of garbage flowing from major rivers around the world. The NGOs also spotlighted the importance of global citizenship, detailing the efforts they have made in empowering the youth with knowledge, skills and confidence to approach the issues we as both local and global communities face regarding access to clean water, energy and our shared future.

Stakeholders joining us from academia further elaborated this point through their dedication to improving widespread access to information on the true impact of microplastics and the benefits of a circular economy, highlighting the role global citizenship education plays in tackling the issues. Our collaborators, the 2nd Generation Recycling Energy Consortium (EchoFlame and Dohwa Engineering) from the private sector detailed their innovative solutions, including reducing the amount of waste that is deposited into our water and air through eco-friendly technology and engineering advancements using their trailblazing low-carbon emission combustion and energy recycling circulation technologies. The panelists who joined our event from the UN system such as the UNAI of UNDGC and UNESCO spoke strongly on the need for increased global citizenship education, encouraging the connection of university students in the effort to raise awareness of responsible water and plastic consumption.

Collaborating with our panelists and their respective organizations, IVECA is initiating a multi-stakeholder partnership that virtually connects universities in developed and developing countries. The program will empower university students to assess, research, and implement energy recycling circulation as well as other sustainable solutions for clean water in countries around the world. Guided by the mentorship of experts in the academic, engineering, and environmental fields, university students will gain the tools, education and access to conversation with multi-stakeholders needed for sparking widespread youth-led change- a point further stressed by a former IVECA mentor, sharing clever, unconventional solutions students have shared previously. Through IVECA's program, university students will be given access, as the President of the Co-NGO put it, to the platform where they can join the conversation on the local and global realities of the water crisis.

Our efforts in mitigating the problems that face us now must begin with each of us in every corner of society. We strongly insist that stakeholders consider making increased efforts in the partnership towards taking meaningful action through policy-making, financing, technology and education initiatives. As the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations concluded towards the end of the event, we must all come to realize our personal experiences with water and energy are truly shared ones. By forging partnerships through global citizenship education, stakeholders can address the crisis everywhere, together.