

INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE COUNCIL

Interactive Dialogue 2: Water for Sustainable Development:

Valuing Water, Water-Energy-Food Nexus and Sustainable Economic and Urban Development

Wed. 22 March 2023, 15:00-18:00h, Conference Room 4, UNHQ, New York

Presenter: Dr. habil. **Frank Winde**

1. Thank you. As Chair of the IGU Commission for Water Sustainability I am presenting the following statement on behalf of the International Science Council (ISC):
2. As a global umbrella organization with a broad-based membership of over 230 National Science Academies and international unions of the natural and social sciences, the ISC offers evidence-based scientific guidance to address obstacles still hindering progress on crucial water issues.
3. Given the increasing competition for water and the urgency to meet water goals, we need to avoid partial solutions to complex problems. To do that, science that is independent, open and transparent has a key role to play to provide a robust basis for collaboration and joint action.
4. To prioritise scientific input and achieve tangible improvements on the ground the ISC grouped the large number of water challenges into four categories ranging from applying known solutions to long-standing problems like the lack of access to safe water, to the need for new responses to address rapid changes and emerging water issues.
5. For this interactive dialogue, the ISC stresses the need to reconcile the usage of limited water resources with economic and social development to achieve a truly sustainable water use. Related focal areas include inter alia:
 - rapid and uncontrolled urbanization leaving millions of vulnerable dwellers exposed to flood, drought and pollution while burdening health systems and harming economies
 - redesign the trade of embedded water to stop exacerbating water-stress in exporting regions
 - address potentially perilous shifts within the Water-Energy-Food nexus associated with the global green energy transition:
 - as electric cars, wind- and solar parks require significant more metals and minerals per output than their technological predecessors and most high-grade mineral deposits already being depleted, the transformation towards low-carbon economies will require a significant expansion of an increasingly water- and energy intensive extraction of minerals that is likely to exacerbate the fierce competition for natural resources in water-stressed areas of the global South where most of the global mining takes place
6. The ISC is committed to provide comprehensive, holistic and geographically diverse expertise to support the UN and countries to achieve all water-related SDGs.