

Written Statement submitted to the 2023 UN Conference on Water

with reference to Interactive Dialogue 5

New York, March 24, 2023

The French Water Partnership is a multi-stakeholder coalition that brings together our country government, local public authorities, the private sector, NGOs and research institutes.

In 2015 with the 2030 Agenda, the UN Member States adopted a clear vision of freshwater challenges and some twenty global water-related targets. However, since 2015, they have never discussed action plans to achieve these goals, nor have they examined, together, the new corresponding statistics.

Progress is far too slow and there is even deterioration in some places. A very strong acceleration of the action resulting from public water policies is indispensable.

In this context, it seems to us that the 3 main challenges of this UN Conference on Freshwater are to find ways:

>> to organise intergovernmental meetings of the United Nations on freshwater on a regular basis, not once every two generations.

A mechanism for regular intergovernmental meetings would allow Member States to:

- regularly discuss freshwater and sanitation issues and challenges
- promote and review progress towards the water-related SDG Targets;
- guide and impulse the work of the United Nations on water and sanitation
- Adopt policy decisions and remedial action when necessary.

The secretariat of this permanent mechanism could be entrusted to a strengthened UN-Water. It should be supported by a group of independent scientists and experts to collect global knowledge and data on all major water and sanitation challenges.

The appointment of a Special Envoy of the Secretary General for Water and Sanitation will be an important step towards this goal.

Note: These topics are part of recommendations 65, 66 and 67 of the concept paper of the Interactive Dialogue 5 of the Conference

>> to accelerate strongly the actions to achieve the 20 global water-related targets.

Taking action on water and sanitation does not guarantee that the global targets will be met. The world is far behind on many of them.

- Action plans that explicitly address the 20 water-related SDG targets are needed at all levels of governance. These plans must organise the mobilisation of the necessary means: human capacities, financing, knowledge and measurements, innovations and governance, i.e. the 5 axes of acceleration recommended by UN-Water:

- UN Member States should regularly review their collective progress towards the 20 water-related SDG targets, and take corrective action where necessary.



>> to break out of the sectoral 'silos' and integrate the transversal role of water and sanitation into all UN work.

- Include a 'freshwater' component in all thematic UN summits, whether they are related to Health, Food, Climate, Biodiversity, Energy, or Urban Development in the spirit of achieving the many ambitions of the 2030 Agenda in an operational way.
- Organise a UN World Summit dedicated specifically to the theme of "water, soil and agriculture for sustainable development" by involving the water and agriculture communities.
- Mobilise the water-using sectors (agriculture, energy, health, industry, etc.) to take effective action towards the global freshwater goals. Conversely, mobilise the water sector to achieve the global goals for these sectors.

Note: This topic is part of recommendation 68 of the concept paper of Interactive Dialogue 5 of the Conference.

Our contribution to the Water Action Agenda: Water4allSDGs

In the Water Action Agenda, we committed to help all water stakeholders by making available publicly an impact assessment tool that enables anybody to detect and to roughly assess the positive and negative contributions of a project or policy on the whole 2030 Agenda, i.e. the 169 targets of the 17 SDGs.

This web tool is available, free of charge, at <https://water4allSDGs.org>.

It can be easily and quickly used by anybody in any country without having to know the details of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. Some use it during the design period of a project/policy, others during the construction period and others after its completion.

The use of *Water4allSDGs* makes SDG targets concrete and operational. Users experience concretely the systemic value of the 2030 Agenda. Most of them gain a new perception of SDGs.

Then the use of *Water4allSDGs* may help all project and policy owners to better direct their activities towards the achievement of some SDG targets without compromising the achievement of other SDG targets.



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