

UN 2023 Water Conference: Who has mandate?

Many of the facts presented to us towards the UN Water Conference; we have heard before. It's not new that we have water challenges. Yet there we were. We still debated, discussed, and determined the actions we must take. We have listened to great lectures and keynotes. We have witnessed that we are in this blue bubble of like-minded people. However, we need to burst out of our blue-bubble and look outside. **Making the whole world aware about too little, too much and too dirty water.**

Creating awareness has been the focus of NGOs, CSOs, governments and other stakeholders in the first part of the Water Action Decade. Awareness is essential to let the world understand this water crisis and own the problem as a person, company, entity, group, city, region, or culture is causing. But now, awareness needs to turn into action. Making the unaware aware and empowering those who are aware - is what our common focus should be in the water sector. Many of us are aware about the challenges, now we need to become aware of the solutions. Just like **we are all part of the problem; we are all part of the solution.**

Positive improvement has taken place over the past years towards this Conference in terms of meaningful youth engagement. We witnessed the beginning of 'we need to talk about youth', and continuing, in New York, it was all about turning the tide to 'youth talking about water'. Where decision makers stand besides us instead of in front of us. We need to do the same on the content of our Conferences and commitments. We must move from talking about action towards acting on the promises we have made. To facilitate this, **stakeholders need to step up in facilitating youth and their bold ambitions.**

The water sector is characterized by a rapidly ageing labor force. To tackle this, we need to empower the brightest minds with the right tools to tackle the global water challenges. First, open resource, quality, education on water is needed in all regions of the world – especially those most impacted by water challenges as LDCs and SIDS, minorities as women and indigenous, and those without access to quality education. Second, stakeholders in the water sector must facilitate young talent by ensuring that 30% of their labor force is aged below 30 by 2030. Third, development institutions need to support youth-led innovations, nature-based solutions, and local initiatives. Fourth, we need regulatory and legislative organizations to enable the right framework for accountability and responsibility. Fifth, **we need to follow up with the sector and ensure that the next Water Conference will be held well before 2069.**



The next half of the Water Action Decade must be about executing our commitments, regularly discussing best practices, and hold each other accountable on our progress. We should not wait for someone to show ownership or a sense of direction. As when we acknowledge the solution starts with us, impact will follow. We need all to take ownership. We need all to act. **We need all to fill up the glass.**

Wavemakers United is dedicated to do so in a peer-to-peer community through sports and helping youngsters to bring their local innovative onto the global platform and start disruption in the current tides. We commit to educate 1 million youngsters about water worldwide, each year, until 2030. **We are expecting you to commit with us.**

