



UN
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UN 2023 Water Conference Side Event

National Water Roadmaps towards the 2030 Agenda

22 March 2023, 18:30-19:45, UNHQ

Organized by: Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Background on the event

FAO proposed a new initiative called National Water Roadmaps towards the 2030 Agenda. Recognizing the central role of water in contributing to all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) defined in the 2030 Agenda, FAO is supporting Member countries, upon request, in the development of country-specific National Water Roadmaps through country-led dialogues and participatory processes. Such country-led water dialogue and country-owned National Water Roadmaps or strategies will help to strengthen the inter-sectoral coordination on sustainable water resources management and accelerate the implementation of SDG 6 as well as the 2030 Agenda. The Side Event on National Water Roadmaps at the UN 2023 Water Conference provided a platform for highlighting the central leadership role of national government in water governance, sharing information about the National Water Roadmaps for all SDGs and discussing the country-owned development process of national water roadmaps supported by FAO, UN-Water and others.

Water Action Agenda

Recognizing that national governments are at the centre of water governance, such National Water Roadmaps or strategies will help to strengthen the inter-sectoral coordination on sustainable water resources management and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Roadmaps could review and reaffirm water-related objectives and commitments in the existing agendas and strategies, including (intended) Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and/or National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and Common Country Analyses, national water plans/strategies, and other related national development plans and commitments. Due to the irreplaceable water in achieving all SDGs, the development of National Water Roadmaps will

enable the countries to not only make strategic choices with regards to water allocation to different sectors, users and regions, but also to mobilize resources to speed up the SDGs so as to achieve all other SDGs as envisioned by the Agenda 2030. The Roadmaps can set up ambitious targets and measures to for example improve water services delivery, water use efficiency and reduce water pollution across all sectors and achieving the SDG6, as well as other SDGs that are interlinked with water, such as SDG1, SDG2, SDG 12 and SDG13, among others. The most important contribution by the Roadmaps will be to define and develop a national roadmap to equitably and sustainably use water to achieve all SDGs in holistic and coordinated approaches.

The National Water Roadmaps initiative was submitted as a voluntary commitment to the Water Action Agenda: [National Water Roadmaps towards the 2030 Agenda | Department of Economic and Social Affairs \(un.org\)](#)

Key Issues discussed

- Water as a crucial resource for agriculture and economies, human wellbeing and environment.
- Water is utilized for various sectors, therefore cross-sectoral solutions are needed.
- Global norms and standards for sustainable water use and management.
- Water-energy-food-environment (WEFE) nexus approach and integrated water resources management.
- Innovation, technology, and data can support decision making at all levels.

Key recommendations for action

- Water needs to be given a top priority on the political agenda at all levels. All sectoral policies should include water in an integrated and coherent way.
- Member countries are encouraged to develop National Water Roadmaps or strategies, linking water to agriculture and all other sectors.
- Country-led multisectoral dialogues could build the basis of and consensus on the National Water Roadmaps.
- Members should improve coherency between agriculture and other sectors through integrated water management and Water-Energy-Food-Environment Nexus approaches.
- FAO will support Members to develop such National Water Roadmaps, upon request.
- FAO to organize the Rome Water Dialogue annually to catalyse innovation and mobilize political will towards the development of National Water Roadmaps and multisectoral initiatives and approaches to integrated water resources management.