



UN  
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CONFERENCE

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## UN 2023 Water Conference Side Event

### *Sustainability in good governance of groundwater resources*

March 22nd, 2023 –12:30 - 1:45pm, United Nations Headquarters  
(ECOSOC Room)

Organized by: International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO) and the Kingdom of Morocco with the French government, Senegalese government, Spanish government, Finnish government, Swiss government, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), International Water Resources Association (IWRA)

#### **Background on the event (one paragraph)**

The side event follows on from the holding of the UN-Water Summit on Groundwater 2022, and its plenary session on “Governance”, held in Paris from 6 to 8 December 2022. It aims to bring attention to groundwater at the highest international level and comes in response to the water issues raised by His Majesty, Mohammed VI, King of Morocco, who declared during his inaugural speech for the opening session of the Moroccan Parliament on Friday 14th of October 2022: “it is imperative to pay particular attention to the rational exploitation and preservation of groundwater and the preservation of groundwater tables, by putting an end to the phenomenon of illegal pumping and the digging of anarchic wells”. This event, through the high level panel, will be the opportunity to exchange and discuss the challenges, progress, ambitions and commitments on how to ensure the responsible and sustainable use and protection of groundwater resources and how sustainability could be taken into account in groundwater governance, especially at basin level, in order to accelerate SDGs implementation, namely ID2. It also represents the occasion to reiterate the Water Action Agenda commitment, especially related to the Dakar Action Plan for basins of rivers, lakes and aquifers.

**Water Action Agenda (one paragraph, if possible, please include the link to your commitment in the [Water Action Agenda database](#))**

The « Dakar Action Plan for basins of lakes, rivers and aquifers » is an initiative from the Senegal, Morocco, Switzerland, the International Network of Basin Organizations, UNECE, OMVS and OMVG. It provides the technical definition of the principles for actions and commitments needed. It mobilizes the main stakeholders of basin management (basin organisations and committees, ministries, donors, water users' associations, etc.) and calls for acceleration of the achievement of the SDGs by strengthening cooperation, planning, the legal and institutional framework of basin organisations, and the search for innovative financing. The objective of the Dakar Action Plan for basins is to accelerate the achievement of SDGs by and for basin organizations. Under the framework of this plan, basin organizations will strengthen their mobilization to: 1. Confirm their role and effectiveness for Water security, peace, sustainable development. 2. Accelerate implementation of SDGs, in particular to record improvement for Indicators 6.5.1 and 6.5.2. 3. Reinforce upstream-downstream integration and facilitate water resources allocation. IWRM supporters, and in particular bi and multilateral donors and UN Member States will support basin organizations by: 4. Strengthening institutional frameworks, including for transboundary Basin Organizations (TBOs). 5. Strengthening data sharing practices and shared Water Information Systems. 6. Strengthening dissemination of practices and tools for water users participation and awareness raising. 7. Strengthening exchanges with other policy levels. The steering committee of the Dakar Action Plan for basins will be in charge of its governance and will follow-up the implementation of the commitments made.

<https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/dakar-action-plan-basins-lakes-rivers-and-aquifers>

**Key Issues discussed (5- 8 bullet points)**

- Management of groundwater in national and transboundary basins
- Role of the groundwater in the hydrological and ecological cycles
- Groundwater as a resource for drinking water supply
- Impacts of overexploitation and pollution of groundwater resources
- Joint management of groundwater and surface water & Dakar action plan

**Key recommendations for action (5 - 6 bullet points)**

- Develop decentralized organizations at basin level for the conjunctive management of surface water and groundwater
- Strengthen knowledge of groundwaters (quality & quantity) with monitoring networks and water information systems to develop common understanding
- Implement a mix of technical and non-technical solutions and tools for groundwater management (calls for an improved science-to-policy interface)
- Cooperation agreements in transboundary basins, regional multi-level cooperation framework