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UN 2023 Water Conference Side Event

Towards Achievement of Water Action Agenda: Reaching Beyond the Borders

23rd March, 2023, 17:00-18:15, ECOSOC Chamber

Organized by: Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change, Ankara University Water Management Institute

Background on the event

The event was organized by Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Republic of Türkiye with the participation of UNESCO-WWAP and partnership of competent Turkish institutions. The event started with the welcoming speech of H.E. Mr. Vahit Kirişci, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of Republic of Türkiye. H.E. Mr. Muhtar Babayev, Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan Republic and his delegation also honored the event. In total, 47 participants attended the side event from various countries. In the event,

- Dr. Bülent SELEK, Deputy Director General of State Hydraulic Works (DSİ) shared Türkiye's projects and activities to alleviate urgent and severe risks arising from poor water infrastructure in the countries in highest need especially in Africa and the assistance provided to the least developed countries to achieve the SDGs.
- Engin KONCAGÜL from UNESCO World Water Assessment Program shared the findings of UN WWDR2023, highlighted the significance of partnerships and cooperation to accelerate change towards 2030 and expanded on the need to accelerate the achievement of gender equality in the water domain and strengthen reporting on sex-disaggregated data.
- Afire SEVER, Director General of Water Management provided a comprehensive insight into Türkiye's climate change adaptation measures with a specific focus on the effective and efficient use of water across sectors and newly launched national water efficiency campaign.
- Prof. Dr. Bülent İNANÇ, President of Turkish Water Institute (SUEN) shared Türkiye's vision of and experiences in the field of water cooperation beyond borders and including transboundary water cooperation.

- Prof. Dr. Gökşen ÇAPAR, Director of Ankara University Water Management Institute briefly state the significance of science policy interaction and the need to support dialogue between stakeholders to enhance innovative scientific research and policy implementation towards achieving Water Action Agenda.

Water Action Agenda

As one of the top donors of humanitarian aid in proportion to national income, Türkiye pledges to continue providing technical and capacity assistance, sharing her experiences and best practices, supporting the development of water infrastructure within the availability of resources beyond her borders and enhancing international collaboration to access safe, clean and affordable drinking water for all by 2030. Türkiye will contribute to achievement of SDG 6 targets by increasing the proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services and sanitation through enhanced international cooperation and collaboration towards 2030.

<https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/accelerating-change-through-investments-technical-assistance-and-cooperation-beyond>

Key issues discussed

- Importance of collaboration and partnership in accelerating the achievement of SDG 6 and significance of and involvement of women in partnerships was highlighted.
- A global call was announced by Turkish institutions to support least developed countries to develop their water resources and to increase the ratio of population that has access to clean, safe and affordable drinking water.
- The role of improved water efficiency in achieving SDG 6 and adaptation to climate change was discussed.
- The importance of science-policy interaction in the achievement of SDG 6 targets under the impact of climate change was emphasized.

Key recommendations for action

- Urgent, concrete and collaborative action is needed to ensure access to safe, clean and affordable drinking water for all and to achieve SDG 6 by 2030.
- Partnerships can accelerate the development and uptake of innovative technologies.
- Collective action may create additional opportunities for financing.
- Involvement of women in partnerships may improve targeted WASH services and broader water-related goals.
- Establishment of an integrated water management system and building a culture of water efficiency can accelerate the change and achievement of SDG 6.
- There is no “one size fits all” mechanism for transboundary cooperation. Transboundary cooperation is a complex issue that requires tailored solutions for each river basin, taking into account the basin's specific characteristics and needs. While international and regional guidelines can provide helpful frameworks for cooperation, they should also recognize and respect the diversity of water basins.