



UN
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CONFERENCE

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UN 2023 Water Conference Side Event

Water Catchment Protection through a Water Fund for Sustainable and Wider Water Supply Coverage in Freetown, Sierra Leone

23rd March, 2023, 11:00-12:15, Conference Room 7, Inside UN Headquarters

Organized by: Government of Sierra Leone & the Ministry of Water Resources in Sierra Leone, GVWC, NWRMA, SALWACO, CRS, AfDB

Background on the event (one paragraph)

The current Water Supply situation in Freetown and the Western Area is somewhat precarious. The population on the peninsula is growing rapidly, far ahead of the water supply infrastructure that provides access to safe drinking water. The capacity of water supply lags the demand for water. To help close this gap in the short-term, the water utility for the Western Area, Guma Valley Water Company, has engaged a number of coping strategies from rationing of water supply to different parts of the city, to the provision of community water tanks fed by bowsers.

Fortunately, the Western Area is also home to the Western Area Peninsula National Park (WAPNP), which is home to 61 major watersheds (10 of which has the potential to have dams that will create reservoirs to capture and store rainwater in the Rainy Season, for use throughout the Dry Season). These water watersheds, if well protected, will act as a source of water for supply in decades to come. The development and operationalization of the Western Area Peninsula Water Fund (WAP-WF) through nature-based solution, will act as a financial and management mechanism for the effective protection of the watersheds and other vital ecosystem services within the WAPNP.

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

- Effectively Protect the WAPNP (Operationalize the WAP-WF business case);
- Minimize Water Wastage;
- Provide a sustainable water supply service;
- Mobilize financial resources to implement the Strategic Water Projects.

Key Issues discussed (5- 8 bullet points)

- Protection of Western Area Peninsula National Park (WAPNP) through a Water Fund to regenerate degraded parts of the park, invest in alternative livelihood schemes for nearby communities, and construct concrete barriers on the Green Belt demarcating the park;

- GVWC highlighted the fact that the WAPNP hosts 61 water catchments that are crucial to the supply of water to the Western Area for decades to come;
- GVWC recently completed the Freetown Water Supply and Sanitation Master Plan Studies, which has identified potential sites for the construction of 10 new dams with reservoirs, will capture and store water for supply to the people of the Western Area. The 10 new dams should be constructed within the next 27 years, including the construction of 3 dams within the next five years, at an estimated cost of US \$290 million;
- The Government of Sierra Leone hopes to raise the immediate necessary financing needs through grants, loans, public/private partnerships, etc.
- Target organizations for raising financing include Development Partners, Humanitarian Organizations, Green Finance/Investment facilities, and the Private Sector.

Key recommendations for action (5 - 6 bullet points)

- To tap into potential Green Climate facilities;
- Leverage Public Private Partnerships;
- Sierra Leone to ensure that the applicable legislation is in place to attract private capital into the Water Sector.
- Ensure modalities to protection of individual investments in the Water Fund.
- Operationalize the WAP-WF business case.