



## UN 2023 Water Conference Side Event

*Mission critical: transforming future water security*

March 23, 11:00 - 12:15, NATURE HUB

Organized by:

International Water Management Institute (IWMI); African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW); Water Research Commission (WRC); World Youth Parliament for Water (WYPW); Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS); Hisaar Foundation; Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR); World Farmers Organisation; CGIAR

### Background on the event

Threats to water security are growing while the world is on track for warming of >2oC. A 2-degree world will face extreme risks to water security. **To prepare, we must turn urgency into action now; we must activate high-ambition pathways for future water security.**

IWMI, working with youth co-guardians, and more than 60 partners across the Global South, co-convened a multi-stakeholder dialogue among more than 400 organizations to ask how. From this, stakeholders concluded a set of 8 demand-led, high-ambition missions for inclusive, science-based action on water security.

The high-ambition missions will deliver impact at scale by aligning applied research, youth leadership, policy change, inclusive development, private sector action, and investment via mission-driven alliances built around each mission and supported by invested key stakeholders.

The following are the identified Transformative Futures for Water Security high-ambition missions for inclusive, science-based action on water security:

- Build farmers' resilience to climate change and water risks – by using climate-smart interventions and raising water productivity to transform agriculture.
- Deliver sustainable, stakeholder-driven water sanitation and hygiene services – with accountable institutions, adequate information and policies to achieve universal access.
- Increase freshwater availability – through circular management of wastewater everywhere, new technologies for non-conventional water, and cutting non-revenue losses.
- Make water infrastructure future ready – using ecological and built infrastructure that is complementary, equitable and resilient.
- Overcome data and information barriers – by developing and operationalizing digital solutions for basins and aquifers worldwide.

- Make water decisions fit for the future – by integrating the full range of values of water and the objectives of multiple sectors and stakeholders and their tradeoffs.
- Deliver good water governance and transboundary cooperation – that is inclusive, participatory, equitable, accountable, responsive, and smart.
- Adapt to future water regimes and risks – with enhanced climate information, preparedness, management innovation and capacity development.

The full commitment to the Water Action Agenda is available at the following link: <https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/high-ambition-missions-transformation-future-water-security>

### **Key issues discussed**

- Presentation of the Transformative Futures for Water Security initiative and the 8 high-ambition missions.
- Launch of the 8 high-ambition missions to catalyse wider support.
- Emphasize the unique role Youth leaders play as co-guardians of the initiative.
- Interactive conversation with the audience on how to activate the missions and how to align and converge to drive ambition.
- Concrete examples and approaches provided through various perspectives and sectors on how use the missions to drive ambition (specific examples).

### **Key recommendations for action**

- The identified Transformative Futures for Water Security high-ambition missions for inclusive, science-based action on water security can be used as catalysers of alignment and convergence around common goals across the policy, business, development, and applied research sectors.
- The Transformative Futures for Water Security high-ambition missions must build on and deliver on what already exists, fortifying existing connections and identifying and addressing any gaps; efforts must be made to engage stakeholders outside of the water community.
- The Transformative Futures for Water Security initiative will catalyse the coming together of coalitions supporting each high ambition mission across the different stakeholder groups that have been engaged and will be engaged all along the process. Coalitions around each high ambition mission will catalyse the convergence and alignment for transforming water systems for future water security.
- The initiative's next steps will refine and strengthen the mission's components' strategic design.