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UN 2023 Water Conference Side Event

Water We Waiting For? A Trans-Continental Forum on Setting the Water Action Agenda for Sustainable Development

21 March 2023; 9 am - 1 pm EST; Barnard College, New York City

Organized by: Delft University of Technology, TU Delft | Water For Impact, Barnard College, Columbia University, Tahmo, eaway, ETH Zürich, the University of Alabama, Kenya Meteorological Department, Unicamp, UDS Tamale

Background on the event

The aim of this side session is to open-up the UN2023 Water Conference to the world . We'll be bringing together water consortia from across the globe, with hubs in São Paulo (Brazil), Nairobi (Kenya), and Delft (the Netherlands). In these hubs, cross -sectoral consortia will voluntarily commit to two actionable targets within the thematic focus Water for Sustainable Development: Valuing Water, Water -Energy -Food Nexus and Sustainable Economic and Urban Development (ID2). These targets will contribute to SDGs 2, 6, 11, 12 and 17, and serve as inspiration to discuss how the Water Action Agenda can be shaped with concrete activities. The session is designed to facilitate interactive discussion between panelists and (online) audience, with the aim to collect more actionable targets that could shape the Water Action Agenda on Water for Development.

Water Action Agenda

The contribution to the WAA is twofold, considering the two projects discussed during the event. The first target is to cover at least 10 SSA countries with accurate and timely rainfall maps, using a combination of satellite data and ground data, discussed with partners in Nairobi, Kenya.

The second contribution is the publication of an open-access white paper of best practices from all continents on inclusive and contextualized circular (waste)water treatment and resource recovery, discussed with partners in Campinas, Brazil.

Key Issues discussed (5- 8 bullet points)

Nairobi:

- Africa and Latin America will be the food basket of the world in the next few decades. Farming is mainly rainfed and there is therefore the need to understand rainfall patterns better. Farmers can grow more if their risks are well managed through effective crop insurance etc.
- We need better gridded rainfall products.
- Rainfall is an important parameter for water balance assessment for reservoirs which provides water for drinking, hydropower, Irrigation, environment and other uses.
- Mapping rainfall is crucial for a better flood and drought early warning system to increase the resilience of communities in Africa but also the rest of the world.
- How can farmers get access to better rainfall information?
- Who should pay for monitoring the African climate?
- Commitment to support 10 African countries in mapping rainfall at high spatial and temporal resolutions.

Campinas:

- Social Diversity and uneven water distribution;
- Transformation of pollutant removal into valuable resources;
- High-added value products (e.g. bioplastics) can be considered for big centralized facilities in high-income states (e.g. SP);

Key recommendations for action (5 - 6 bullet points)

- Empowering people is important.
- Long distances should be considered when choosing consumers for the high - added value products;
- Circular economy is urgent given the lack and uneven distribution of water