



UN  
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## UN 2023 Water Conference Side Event

**‘Accelerating SDG6 through cross sectoral partnerships - A high level policy dialogue’**

18/03/2023, 7PM (IST), Virtual

Organized by: **India Water Foundation and World Water Council**

### **Background on the event**

SDG 6 is to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all by 2030. However, SDG 6 goes far beyond water and sanitation services to cover the entire water cycle. Water is not just a sector but a connector, a key enabler and solution addressing multiple global challenges from climate change to global health and nutrition, while supporting other sectors to progress. If we fail to reach the 2030 agenda we are not only endangering the success of many other sectors and global agendas but we put our future at risk. Aside from domestic purposes, water is needed across all sectors of society, to produce food, energy, goods and services. Over the last years, many fora have identified challenges, formulated recommendations and acknowledged the need for action to achieve the water-related Goals and targets. The implications that its (non) achievement will have for almost all other SDGs, as well as for the global ability to deal with climate change, biodiversity loss and disasters is daunting. Increasing urbanization, a growing population together with current challenges such as the Covid-19 pandemic, migration and increasing loss of ecosystems and biodiversity underline the urgency for cross-sectoral action. Integrating our approaches with improved governance and coordination across sectors and geographical borders is an imperative to accelerate SDG6 achievements.

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

We ardently support the realization of Interlinking ‘Think Water –Think Health’ and would like to recommend the inclusion of cross implementation of SDG 3 that calls for Good Health and Well Being and SDG 6 with focus on Water and Sanitation. This has the potential to harness inter-related development priorities in the task of rural development and priorities; bring coordination between multi-stakeholders and help improve the efficacy of even government’s programs as well. Bringing such endeavors under one platform shall help address critical problems and issues. Since water is not a mere a sector but a socio-economic connector and ecosystems are linked with water. It is a key component of sustainable development, we are hopeful the acceleration framework addresses in holistic terms various targets of SDG 6 like water and sanitation; water management, especially water availability & quality in reducing vulnerability; water-use efficiency and strengthening water-linked ecosystem services. We are affirmative that the SDG framework shall enhance the scope towards Cooperation, Collaboration and Convergence through multi-stakeholders such as Government, civil societies, private entities and international agencies.

Link: <https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/enhancing-water-use-efficiency-through-transversality-systemic-approach>

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

1. To identify and find solutions on several bottlenecks impeding greater progress on SDG 6 acceleration.
2. Identify Policy and institutional fragmentation between levels, actors and sectors so that decisions taken in one sector (e.g. agriculture, energy, health, and environment consider the impacts on water availability and water quality in other sectors.
3. Funding gaps and fragmentation impede progress across levels, while data and information often are not available or not shared between sectors for effective informed decision making.
4. Gaps in institutional and human capacity, especially at the level of local governments and water and sanitation providers' leads to slows implementation of SDG 6 along with outdated infrastructure and governance models.
5. Potential for effective partnerships, programming and alliances across sectors
6. How to assertively link Native Communities in the processes of development, strengthening of capacities and forging effective partnerships?

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

1. We have to identify opportunities to integrate water management into sectoral programmes and planning processes such as climate change, agriculture and poverty reduction and establish formal coordination mechanisms, with clear institutional mandates, responsibilities, and incentives for coordination.
2. We have to adopt transversality approach to water management by bringing together optimized financing; improved data and information; enhanced capacity; innovations; and enhanced governance.
3. We need to accelerate actions and reverse trends on all parameters of Goal 6 to ensure safe drinking water and access to sanitation is provided to all. We need strong political and financial backing for national infrastructural water projects and innovative technologies.
4. Among all the 17 SDGs SDG6 is the most critical because it accentuates poverty, impacts climate, food security, access to energy etc. We need to collaborate more effectively across sectors and bring forth innovations, data acquisition and monitoring because lack of data accountability and transparency impacts policy and informed decision making.
5. We should work with all the MDBs together and use our resources to catalyze more private financing in the water sector like for irrigation, agriculture, water supply and sanitation, industrial wastewater treatment, recycling, reuse and many more areas where businesses can come together and make money.
6. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework has 23 targets and each of these 23 targets is relevant to water. Implementation of the framework requires action by the whole of government and the whole of society. We have to ensure that areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry are managed sustainably.
7. We have to enhance basin wide management in shared water basins and work with coordinated management to enhance shared ecosystem services rather than simply treating water as a resource focusing on sharing volumes of water.