



UN
2023 WATER
CONFERENCE

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UN 2023 Water Conference Side Event

Water & SDGs - Downscaling WATER relevant SDGs (DWAT-SDGs)

MAR 20, 2023 - 10:00 TO 11:00AM EDT

Organized by:

International Water Resources Association (IWRA); University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA; Federal University of Sergipe, Brazil; Hohai University, China; University of Manchester, U.K.; Monash University, Australia; KEO International Consultants, Egypt; Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, India; and International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

Background on the event

Localizing and realizing SDGs will require deep transformations in every country/ region and a recontextualizing toward a locally relevant subset of goals, due to the diversity of local conditions and priorities across regions in both the developed and developing world, local priority disagreements, competing interests and trade-offs and synergies among multiple sectors and stakeholders, and country/region specific risks posed by future uncertainties. However, current SDG localization efforts are challenged by appropriate institutional support (especially the participation local communities), future uncertainties and risk, limited interactions between science and practice communities, and limited communication among countries and regions.

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

This complex area is being analysed under a Task Force Committee of the International Water Resources Association, which was established in 1971 as a global forum for interdisciplinary knowledge and experience exchange, to supplement the activities of existing organisations and to fill interdisciplinary voids that exist in the professional field of water resources. The task force is also a direct commitment to accelerate water action under the action agenda of the UN 2023 Water Conference.

Key Issues discussed (5- 8 bullet points)

- Claudia Ringler (Deputy Director of Environment and Production Technology Division, IFPRI) gave an overview of the session objectives of the need for achieving progress in SDG 6 through localization, collaboration and knowledge exchange.
- Ximing Cai (Ben Chie Yen Professor, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign) introduced the Task Force of the International Water Resources Association (IWRA) on Water & SDGs as well as the activities of the task force: 1) Synthesizing country experience and raising awareness around the world; 2) Promoting DWAT-SDGs research, education and practices; 3) Developing local SDG water indicators via pilot basins, cities and countries; 4) Promoting evidence-based decision support for local water management, and 5) Developing guidelines for management practices at basin/sub-basin scales.
- Paul Satur (Research Fellow and Lecturer, Monash University Sustainable Development Institute) presented a case study and results from advancing key indicators of SDG 6 in Australia. He noted that Australia only reported on 5 of 11 SDG 6 indicators and proposed a Utility of the Future indicator.
- Riddhi Singh (Associate Professor, Department of Civil Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay) focused on complexities of SDG 6 in India and suggests to further fine tune goals linked to the health of water related ecosystems and to start with a pilot basin study
- Dahlia Sabri (International Development Practitioner, KEO International Consultants, Egypt) presented a case study on SDG 6 in Egypt. Egypt uses a largely top-down approach to monitor and advance progress on SDG6. This could be complemented by bottom up approaches.
- Alcigeimes B. Celeste (Associate Professor at the Department of Civil Engineering at the Federal University of Sergipe) discussed the role of SDG 6 in the water-abundant country of Brazil and finds that despite water abundance few targets are currently achieved.
- Raya Stephan (Water law expert, International consultant; Deputy Editor in Chief, Water International, IWRA) discussed the role of water as a human right and other global commitments in relation to SDG 6.
- Timothy Foster (Senior Lecturer in Water-Food Security, University of Manchester) discussed data needs to make monitoring progress of SDG 6 a reality.

Key recommendations for action (5 - 6 bullet points)

- Localizing and achieving progress on SDG 6 on water and sanitation and related SDGs requires partnership, collaboration as well as exchange of knowledge and information across countries and continents.
- Localizing SDG 6 is essential to realize the Human Right to Water and Sanitation.
- There is a need to involve grassroots organizations in measurement and advancement of SDG 6 on water and sanitation and associated Sustainable Development Goals.
- Localizing SDG 6 requires consideration of transboundary challenges. Transboundary
- There is a need for financial flows to support poorer countries in achieving progress with SDG 6
- The Task Force Committee of the International Water Resources Association extends an open invitation for researchers, practitioners and governments to join the group. Please contact Ximing Cai Cai, Ximing xmcai@illinois.edu.