Statement by the

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

Organizational Session
UN 2026 Water Conference

3 March 2025

VENUE: ECOSOC Chamber, UNHQ, New York

Distinguished Excellencies, esteemed delegates, ladies, and gentlemen,

As the UN's specialized agency for weather, climate, and water, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) monitors the effects of climate change on water resources and provides critical data and insights to help policy and decision-makers address these challenges.

The year 2024 was the hottest on record, and 2023 saw the driest conditions for global rivers in over three decades. Nearly half the planet experienced lower-than-normal annual river flows, while the world's glaciers recorded their largest mass loss in almost fifty years. Increasingly severe droughts and devastating floods continue to afflict communities worldwide. As temperatures rise, the atmosphere retains more moisture, intensifying precipitation events as well as longer dry periods at the same time. Every fraction of additional warming increases the risk of extreme events, posing a severe threat to future water security for billions of people. Therefore, early warning systems were never more important.

Integrated water and climate solutions are essential for both climate change adaptation and mitigation. The UN 2023 Water Conference underscored this in the Interactive Dialogue 3, "Water for Climate, Resilience, and Environment". The dialogue emphasized that water is not just a challenge but also a crucial part of the solution, supporting marine, terrestrial, and freshwater ecosystems in delivering services for climate action.

Participants called for the establishment of a Global Water Information System based on the "Hydrological Status and Outlook System (HydroSOS)" and targeted water reporting. This is critical for improving water management, strengthening climate resilience, enhancing early warning systems, and supporting risk-informed decision-making. WMO remains committed to this effort, already assisting over 60 countries in implementing HydroSOS and publishing the fourth report on the Global State of Water Resources later this year.

Recognizing the importance of water for climate, WMO recommends to the General Assembly to maintain this theme for an interactive dialogue at the UN 2026 Water Conference to advance Sustainable Development Goal 6 and other globally agreed development goals. Strengthening the scientific understanding of climate change impacts on water resources, fostering knowledge-sharing, promoting access to data, technology and innovation, and facilitating the links between sustainable water management for climate action are essential topic.

As we supported Member States in shaping Interactive Dialogue 3 at the UN 2023 Water Conference, WMO stands ready to contribute evidence-based insights and to inform the discussions at the UN 2026 Water Conference, ensuring sustainable solutions to accelerate progress on Sustainable Development Goal 6 and elevate the issue of water within the international agenda.

Thank you very much.

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