



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

#HLPF #SDGs #GlobalGoals

SDGs in focus

SDG 6 and interlinkages with other SDGs – Clean water and sanitation

Tuesday, 11 July 2023, 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM, Conference Room 4

Dr. Rola Dashti, USG and Executive Secretary, ESCWA

Esteemed participants,

Water security is a critical concern for all regions, and it is a connector and accelerator for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In the African, Arab, and Latin American regions, there is a growing competition for increasingly scarce water resources, which poses a risk of conflict within and among communities and countries. These regions advocate for water security and enhance water diplomacy to address this challenge effectively.

Water pollution from cities, industries, and agriculture is a priority in Europe, Asia, and Latin America. Inadequate water infrastructure contributes to a lack of access to clean water for both people and the environment.

Groundwater overextraction is a pressing issue, particularly in the Arab and African regions. This problem threatens the availability of freshwater reserves.

Extreme weather events and climate change have resulted in water-related loss and damage across all regions. Resulting in significant burden on countries already struggling with high debt.

To achieve the ambitions of SDG6 and the Water Action Decade, the UN Regional Commissions have identified five priority actions:

1. Mainstream integrated water resources management into national development policies and plans. This includes investing in climate-resilient water services, breaking silos, and engaging relevant ministries, agencies, and stakeholders in the Water Action Agenda.
2. Recognize that water and climate change do not respect borders. Floods, droughts, and destructive storms have devastating impacts on lives and livelihoods. Adequate adaptation and disaster risk reduction measures are necessary to address these challenges.
3. Promote transboundary water cooperation, building on the momentum fostered by member states. Recent developments include Cameroon, Nigeria, and Namibia joining the 1992 Water Convention. Iraq also acceded to the

Convention during the Water Conference, becoming the first Arab country to do so. Panama has become the first Latin American country to join the Convention.

4. Improve data collection and sharing through open-access water platforms and capacity building initiatives.
5. Mobilize financing for water-related initiatives. This includes funneling public and private sector investments and exploring new instruments such as blue bonds, debt swaps, and credit enhanced guarantees. The Arab Initiative to Mobilize Climate Finance for Water, launched by ESCWA and partners, aims to address the finance gap.

The Regional Commissions have facilitated regional engagement to advance the SDGs and Water Action Agenda commitments. They call on member states and stakeholders to translate commitments into action during the second half of the Water Action Decade, ensuring water security for sustainability, peace, and prosperity for all

Thank you.