

WMO input to the 2020 HLPF thematic review of “Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”

WMO Contribution to 2020 HLPF Thematic Review

BACKGROUND TO THIS SUBMISSION

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and its community of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services, Technical Commissions, Research Board, Programmes, Regional Offices, Regional Climate Centers and Regional Specialized Meteorological and Hydrological Centers, contribute to accelerating action in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at a national, regional and international level, through a broad range of science and services that help save lives, protect livelihoods and promote well-being. Whether it be regarding food security, health, water and sanitation, resilient infrastructure and cities, clean energy, the sustainable management of oceans, land and ecosystems, building more resilient societies to weather and climate events remains an imperative and a necessary step to accelerating progress towards sustainable development. Whilst weather, climate, hydrology and environmental services cut across a wide range of SDGs, WMO also maintains a focus, and is the co-custodian of SDG 13 on Climate Action, providing decision makers with the scientific facts and analyses they need to inform urgent climate action policies and achieve SDG 13.

WMO RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONS POSED

1. Highlight key policies and measures to ensure “accelerated action and transformative pathways” for realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development - critical gaps and priority measures

SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework and the Water and Climate Coalition for SDG 6

Critical Gaps:

SDG 6 - ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all - is alarmingly off track¹. At the current rate of progress, the world will not reach SDG 6 targets by 2030. Rates of progress dating back to 2000 show we have achieved on average 1% annual progress on access to basic water supply and sanitation, whilst at least 3% annual increases are needed to ensure everyone has just basic services by 2030. The water crisis is getting worse and put simply there are twin threats:

1. Water demand is increasing due to population growth, urbanization, and changing consumption patterns and
2. Water supply is degrading in quantity and quality because of unsustainable use and climate change

Water is required to deliver almost all other SDGs; lack of progress on SDG 6 is undermining efforts to address the entire 2030 Agenda.

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Priority Measures:

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) is committing, in collaboration with other partners, organizations, academia and agencies, coordinated through UN Water, to a **SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework** to unify the multilateral system for sustainable water and sanitation for all. The framework will assist countries to raise their ambition and rapidly accelerate towards national targets for SDG 6 and in doing so contribute to progress across the 2030 Agenda – including poverty reduction, food security, health, peace, sustainability and climate resilience of communities, ecosystems and production systems.

The Global Accelerator Framework forms part of the Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs by 2030, and builds on ongoing processes, including the Water Action Decade 2018-2028 and its associated Action Plan, as well as the United Nations Secretary-General’s global call to action for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in all health care facilities and the Agenda for Humanity. The framework will be officially launched later in 2020 and will utilize the high-level events in 2021 and 2023 combined with strengthened system wide collaboration at country level to accelerate and showcase progress on SDG 6 and ultimately across the 2030 Agenda.

The purpose of the SDG 6 Global Accelerator Framework is to deliver results in countries at increased scale and pace of progress towards SDG 6 on water and sanitation as part of the Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs by 2030. The multilateral system and its partners will dramatically improve its support to countries through swift and well-coordinated responses to country requests, through coordinated action under the following five accelerator themes to unlock bottlenecks, through strengthened accountability.

The framework will aim to accelerate country progress on SDG 6 in five thematic areas:

1. **Financing** – Optimize financing to the sector
2. **Data & information** – Build trust through data exchange for decision making and accountability
3. **Capacity development** – Focus on human capacity to deliver sustainable services
4. **Innovation** – Leverage innovation to accelerate SDG 6
5. **Governance** – Make SDG6 everyone’s business through clear roles and strong institutions

Overall coordination of the SDG 6 Global Accelerator Framework will be by UN-Water, through heads of agency commitment.

In support of the SDG 6 Global Accelerator Framework and to ensure accelerated action takes place, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) is convening interested partners to a “**Water and Climate Coalition for SDG 6**”. This coalition will work to vitalize the accelerator framework through taking responsibility and championing clear and tangible activities that deliver progress on climate and water issues, across the framework’s five thematic areas. In particular, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) is committed to developing an implementation plan to ensure Members get better access to water and climate related data and information, entailing the following three activity areas:

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1. **One UN data portal:** Develop, with partners, the SDG 6 data portal further into the “Global Data Portal for Water” – an interface providing unified access to all UN and national physical water data holdings. This will significantly increase Members’ capabilities to ensure better water planning and decision making
2. **Fit for purpose observing systems:** Implement hydrological monitoring networks to enhance Members capabilities to assess what their current water situation is and to estimate future needs/availability relations
3. **Training:** Launch distance learning courses on observing and data sharing for hydrologists worldwide.

A website of the “Water and Climate Coalition for SDG 6 will be launched later this year to present the coalitions commitments and track progress on delivery.

2. Contribution of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) to accelerated action and transformative pathways and realizing the decade of action and delivery for achieving the 2030 Agenda within its area of responsibility.

As described in the background material to this submission, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and its community contribute to achieving the 2030 Agenda through a broad range of science, products and services that cut across many of the SDGs. Furthermore, in June 2019, the Eighteenth World Meteorological Congress approved a package of sweeping reforms and a new strategic plan, aimed accelerating those contributions and realizing the decade of action and delivery for achieving the 2030 Agenda. The plans are guided by the WMO’s vision to see *“By 2030, a world where all nations, especially the most vulnerable, are more resilient to the socioeconomic impact of extreme weather, water, climate and other environmental events; and empowered to boost their sustainable development through the best possible services, whether over land, at sea or in the air.”*

The reforms include embracing a more comprehensive Earth system approach, a stronger focus on water resources and the ocean, more coordinated climate activities, advancing integrated health and urban services and a more concerted effort to translate science into services for society. They pave the way for greater engagement with the rapidly growing private sector and more structured collaboration with development agencies.

The reform includes an overhauling of the WMO governance structure to ensure that it is better equipped to tackle mounting challenges such as climate change, extreme weather, environmental degradation and urbanization, whilst harnessing technological advances from satellites, supercomputing, artificial intelligence and big data. They seek to narrow the growing capacity gap between rich and poor and to channel more resources to WMO’s regional operations.

Details of the key areas of contribution of the WMO to accelerated action and transformative pathways for achieving the 2030 Agenda can be found in the [Final Abridged version of the Eighteenth World Meteorological Congress Report](#).

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3. Selected recommendations for accelerating progress and moving on transformative pathways for realizing the decade of action, for possible use in drafting the HLPF declaration.

As the UN’s Specialized Agency for meteorology (weather and climate), operational hydrology, environment and related geophysical sciences, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) makes the following recommendations regarding the reaffirmation of the importance of science, science based services and the sustainability and compatibility of data in the Political Declaration of the 2020 High Level Political Forum.

- **Recommendation 1: The Political Declaration to the 2020 High Level Political Forum should reaffirm the importance of harnessing science, technology and innovation to underpin both policy and services that accelerate progress in achieving the sustainable development goals.** Science, technology and innovation continue to be critical in underpinning our understanding of the world, enabling evidence-based policy development, and providing solutions to the greatest challenges we face. The institutions of WMO’s community work at the forefront of science to unlock new approaches, technologies and services that can dramatically accelerate efforts to achieving many of the Sustainable Development Goals. Science, technology and innovation was identified in the Political Declaration of the 2019 HLPF as one of the ten cross cutting areas where actions could have an impact on the SDGs across the board. WMO would stress the importance of maintaining this area of focus in the political declaration, and including references to science based services, to fully harness the potential of science in delivering on the SDGs.
- **Recommendation 2: The Political Declaration to the 2020 High Level Political Forum should strengthen the importance of sustainable investment in data collection, exchange and use to underpin science, technology and innovation-based services to accelerate action on SDGs.** Weather and climate services that save lives and livelihoods are dependent on solid applied science, sustainable and compatible observing networks that feed into global weather and climate model predictions and projections. Sustainable and compatible observation data like this should be recognized as a global public good. Data and statistics on the SDGs were highlighted in the Political Declaration of the 2019 HLPF as one of the ten cross cutting areas where actions could have an impact on the SDGs across the board. WMO recommends stressing the importance of ensuring data is funded in a sustainable way, compatible well with existing global networks, and aimed at effectively underpinning products and services that accelerate action on SDGs.