

Draft Concept

UN-WATER Side Event

Climate-resilient Water Management Approaches

Tuesday, 10 December 2019, 16:45 – 18:15

Room I, IFEMA - Feria de Madrid, Madrid, Spain

Organizers: UNESCO (lead) UNECE, WMO, UNDP, UNU-INWEH, UNCCD, ESCWA, SIWI, AGWA, WWC, GWP, FWP, ILO, WHO, IOM, OHCHR, UNICEF, CBD, IWMI, UN – HABITAT, RAMSAR, IAHS

Climate change is inextricably linked to water- for adaptation and mitigation- and there are significant co-benefits to managing climate and water in a more holistic and sustainable manner. The event will present approaches, methodologies and climate action for negotiations and implementation.

AGENDA

- **Welcome remarks by Mr. Olcay Ünver, Vice-Chair, UN-Water (5 mins)**
- **Mr. Peter Thomson, United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean, United Nations (5 mins)**
- **Panel discussion “Meeting the climate challenge” (60 mins)**
 - **Moderator:** Ms. Maggie White, Senior Manager of International Policy, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)
 - **Speakers:**
 - o Mr. Antonio Cañas Calderón (Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, El Salvador)
 - o Mr. Adel Alobeiaat (Head of Policy and Strategic Planning Directorate, Ministry of Water and Irrigation, Jordan)
 - o Dr Callist Tindimugaya (Commissioner for Water Resources Planning and Regulation, Ministry of Water and Environment, Uganda)
 - o Mr. Abdou Guero (Technical Director, Niger Basin Authority)
 - o Mr. Willy Missack (Pacific Climate Change Collaboration, Influencing and Learning Project Manager, Vanuatu Climate Action Network and Vanuatu Humanitarian Team Coordinator, Oxfam)
- **Q&A with the audience (15 mins)**
- **Closing remarks by UN-Water Vice-Chair (5 mins)**

FOCUS OF THE SESSION

The main goal is to inform participants and UNFCCC negotiators key finding findings of the UN-Water Policy Brief on Climate Change and Water, supported by case studies presented by member states and experts on several themes identified by the Policy Brief.

Water is a precondition to life on Earth and is essential for sustainable development. Safe drinking water and sanitation are human rights. Water – including sanitation – is critical for socioeconomic development, food security and healthy ecosystems, and is vital for reducing the global burden of disease and improving the health, welfare and productivity of populations. The most vulnerable and without access to clean drinking water and sanitation are often the ones that are also at the frontlines of climate change impacts.

The science is clear: the global climate change crisis is increasing variability in the water cycle, thus reducing the predictability of water availability and demand, affecting water quality, exacerbating water scarcity and threatening sustainable development worldwide. These impacts disproportionately affect poor and vulnerable communities and are compounded by contributing factors, including population increase, unmanaged migration, land-use change, reduced soil erosion, accelerated groundwater extraction, widespread ecological degradation and biodiversity loss.

While all regions of the globe are affected, the impacts of climate change are highly variable and uneven. Some regions are experiencing extraordinary periods of drought, others increasingly severe and frequent floods and storms, while some face both sets of extremes. Slower-onset impacts derived from accelerated sea-level rise affect coastal areas, posing a particularly direct threat to small, low-lying island nations. At the same time, increased demand for water for energy, agriculture, industry and human consumption is leading to gradually more difficult trade-offs for this limited and precious resource, especially in areas of the world already facing water stress. For these reasons, it is often said that climate change is felt most directly through water.

Climate change represents a profound threat and an unprecedented opportunity to invest in and transform water governance and management systems so humanity can thrive in an increasingly uncertain and variable future. With regard to intergenerational justice, the global climate crisis raises particularly pressing issues, such as which risks society should be allowed to impose on future generations. Young people around the world are using their knowledge and innovation to offer solutions, raise awareness, pursue climate justice and advocate for enhanced global action to address and combat the climate crisis and its consequences. One of the examples of youth action on climate change includes the recent Communication to the Committee on the Rights of the Child submitted by 16 youth activists through the Third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. As they correctly and urgently insist, the time to act is now.

COP25 CONTACT

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