

National perspectives on a water goal and its implementation

Executive summary

These consultations strongly reinforce that a dedicated water SDG is not just needed – it is fundamental for the post-2015 sustainable development framework. This sentiment is so strong in the consultations that the debate for stakeholders is now about 1) How to frame national targets and indicators, and 2) How to enable countries to realise a dedicated water goal.

Between February and April 2014 the Global Water Partnership (GWP) brought together around 1,200 participants in 29 countries to give voice to stakeholders on the proposals for a water goal and targets within the post-2015 development agenda. The consultations brought together voices from the environment, agriculture, planning, and infrastructure sectors including political representatives, government officials, and delegates from the private sector and civil society.

The most important conclusion from the stakeholder consultations was an overall acceptance of the goal and the five targets proposed in the UN-Water Technical Advice paper. There was:

- **broad consensus** that a dedicated water goal is fundamental within the post-2015 development agenda
- **strong support** for comprehensive and inter-related targets that further advance integrated approaches to water
- **clear preference** for a “dashboard” approach, with flexibility for setting national targets, supported by clear definitions of terms and indicators.

“Water is ‘the engine of our sustainable development’.”

Argentina consultation

“A water goal makes economic sense.”

Pakistan consultation

Participants also highlighted that the proposed goal of “*Securing sustainable water for all*” fits with national development priorities, and the five suggested targets are in line with existing or planned national visions, policies, and development plans in most countries.

With strong consensus on the proposed goal and support for the targets emerging, participants were able to move quickly into rich discussions on the means of and challenges to implementation. In particular the consultations highlight that:

- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent an opportunity to adopt new implementation pathways, including greater stakeholder participation, particularly of the poor, indigenous peoples, youth, and women.
- Institutions will need to be strengthened to deliver results across the broad spectrum of water, sanitation, and related areas.
- Improving individual and institutional capacity will be key to achieving the future development agenda.
- Institutional coordination remains a challenge, especially in circumstances where there is an underlying capacity deficit.

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- There is a clear call for new infrastructure, and the rehabilitation, operation, and maintenance of existing infrastructure.
- The scale of investment required to meet the proposed targets will be substantial.
- New technology is seen as playing a crucial role in implementing the water goal and targets.
- An innovative and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system is needed to measure progress on implementing the SDGs.

“*A dedicated global goal offers a unique opportunity to ensure water for people, economies, and environmental needs, while conserving the Earth's finite and vulnerable water resource base for current and future generations.*”

Romania consultation

“*The multi-dimensional nature of poverty means inequalities in access to WASH and discrimination of poor and marginalised groups must be tackled together.*”

Uganda consultation

Throughout these consultations participants expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to critically look at the future development agenda in the context of their own development priorities. In particular they felt that these consultations:

- helped countries look towards the future and where they wanted to be in terms of water-related issues by 2030
- created a platform for broader ownership of and influence on the global development agenda beyond 2015
- informed governments of local perspectives on water as input to the Open Working Group (OWG) negotiation process.

About GWP

GWP is internationally recognised as a leading advocate for the integrated development and management of water, land, and related resources in order to support economic efficiency, social equity, and environmental sustainability – the three pillars of sustainable development.

Founded in 1996, GWP's network comprises 13 Regional Water Partnerships, 84 Country Water Partnerships, and 2,900 partner organisations in 172 countries.



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