

# Regional Dialogue on Accelerating Implementation of the Water Action Agenda

UN 2023 Water Conference Side Event

## *Concept Note*

Date: Friday 24 March 2023

Time: 8:00 – 9:15 am

Room: UNHQ Conference Building – Conference Room 2 (CR2)

Webcast live link: <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k15/k15jo8h590>

Webpage: [www.tinyurl.com/2p8cc3hr](http://www.tinyurl.com/2p8cc3hr)

Email: [escwa-H2O@un.org](mailto:escwa-H2O@un.org)

Event ID: HQ142

### **Organizing partners and contributors:**

- **Member States:** Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management, **Austria**; Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, **Egypt**; Ministry of Environment, **El Salvador**; Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV), **Federal Republic of Germany**; Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture, **Saudi Arabia** (tbc); and Ministry of Energy and Water Resources, **Tajikistan**
- **United Nations Regional Commissions:** Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)
- **Civil Society:** Network of Water and Climate Organisations of Central African Youth (ECA region); Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment (ECE region); Latin American Coalition of Youth for Water (ECLAC region); India Water Foundation (ESCAP region); Bahr Alolom Forum, Iraq (ESCWA region)

**Lead organization:** ESCWA, in coordination with ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP and Germany

### **Background**

The United Nations General Assembly resolution proclaiming the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018-2028 (A/RES/71/222) emphasizes the importance of cooperation and partnerships at all levels to achieve internationally agreed water-related goals and targets and called for the organization of activities at the global, regional and country levels to support the Decade.

UNGA resolution A/RES/73/226 then decided that the midterm comprehensive review of the Water Action Decade would be convened as a United Nations conference in March 2023. The conference would be preceded by regional and global preparatory meetings to support the review process, including the implementation of the United Nations Secretary-General’s Action Plan for the Decade.

In response, the five United Nations Regional Commissions engaged member States and stakeholders in regional consultations during 2022 and 2023 that assessed progress and identified regional priorities and initiatives for mobilizing water action. Coordination of these meetings was supported by the UN-Water Regional Level Coordination Expert Group and its Regional Discussions Groups coordinated by the United Nations Regional Commissions. Regional preparatory meetings were organized for: (1) Africa; (2) Arab States; (3) Asia and the Pacific; (4) Europe and Central Asia; and (5) Latin America and the Caribbean.

These preparations complemented the Water Dialogues for Results that were organized by the Federal Government of Germany in 2021. The dialogues included virtual consultations at the regional level, which were coordinated with United Nations Regional Commissions, and a global dialogue in Bonn.

This side event is organized by the United Nations Regional Commissions in support of the UN-Water Regional Level Coordination Expert Group contributions to the Water Action Decade and in collaboration with the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) of Germany.

### Objective

The side event will share outcomes from the regional preparatory meetings and dialogues convened to inform the UN 2023 Water Conference in the five regions covered by the United Nations Regional Commissions. Ministers responsible for water and civil society representatives will share their insights and commitments for accelerating the achievement of water-related goals.

The side event will include a thematic panel focused on water priorities and a second panel focused on means of implementation. The opportunity for discussion and interventions from the floor will be provided following each panel.

**Related thematic interactive dialogue:** Water Action Decade: Accelerating the implementation of the objectives of the Decade, including through the UN Secretary-General's Action Plan

### Agenda

*Friday, 24 March 2023*

Moderators: Ms. Katinka Weinberger, Chief of Section, ESCAP; Co-Coordinator, UN-Water Regional Level Coordination Expert Group  
Ms. Carol Chouchani Cherfane, Cluster Leader, Climate Change and Natural Resource Sustainability Cluster, ESCWA; Director, Arab Centre for Climate Change Policies, Co-Coordinator, UN-Water Regional Level Coordination Expert Group

8:00 – 8:30 **Panel 1: Priorities for Water Action in the Regions**

*\*Each speaker will have 3-4 minutes to speak*

Panellists:

- Ms. Olga Algayerova, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)
- H.E. Mr. Hani Swailem, President, African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW); Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation, Egypt
- H.E. Mr. Abdulaziz Alshaibani, Incoming President, Arab Ministerial Water Council (15th Session); Deputy Minister for Water, Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (tbc)
- Mr. José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Statement – delivered by Ms. Jeannette Sanchez, Director of Natural Resources Division, ECLAC

- Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) –Video Statement
- Civil Society Perspectives:
- Ms. Emma Anakhasyan, Women for Water Partnership and Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment
  - Mr. Kenneth Alfaro, Latin American Coalition of Youth for Water
  - Mr. Arvind Kumar, President, India Water Foundation
- 8:30 – 8:40 Interventions from the floor  
*\*Interventions will be limited to 2 minutes each*
- 8:40 – 9:00 **Panel 2: Means of Implementation for Regional Results**  
*\*Each speaker will have 3-4 minutes to speak*
- Panellists:
- Ms. Rola Dashti, United Nations Under-Secretary-General, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)
  - H.E. Mr. Fernando López, Minister of Environment, El Salvador
  - Mr. Günter Liebel, Secretary General, Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management, Austria
  - Mr. Antonio Pedro, Acting Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) – Video Statement
- Civil Society Perspectives:
- Ms. Michèle Okala Abega Epse Nken, Regional Coordinator, Réseau Eau Climat des Organisations des Jeunes de l'Afrique Centrale (Network of Water and Climate Organisations of Central African Youth, RECOJAC)
  - Mr. Mahdi Bahr Aluloom, Executive Director, Iraq's Thirst Initiative, Bahr Alolom Forum, Iraq
- 9:00 – 9:10 Interventions from the floor  
*\*Interventions will be limited to 2 minutes each*
- 9:10 – 9:15 **Closing Remarks**
- H.E. Ms. Steffi Lemke, German Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety, and Consumer Protection, Federal Republic of Germany
  - H.E. Mr. Daler Juma, Minister of Energy and Water Resources, Tajikistan as Co-Host of the UN 2023 Water Conference

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