

INPUTS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA THE 2026 UN WATER CONFERENCE – INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

“WATER FOR PEOPLE”

A. INTRODUCTION

Water is the foundation of life. Therefore, the value of water must be seen with a people-centered perspective. It is deeply connected to every aspect of human life — including health, education, gender equality and women’s empowerment, poverty eradication, hunger, peace, justice, and social inclusion.

While water is a cross-cutting element across all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and while all SDGs are interlinked, this Interactive Dialogue must, among others, focus on the nexus between SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality and the Empowerment of All Women and Girls), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

B. STATUS, CHALLENGES AND EMERGING ISSUES

1. Water for Poverty Eradication

The Interactive Dialogue must **focus on the dual and mutually reinforcing connection between water challenges and poverty**. People living in poverty are disproportionately deprived of access to water and sanitation — and the absence of these basic services further entrenches poverty cycles.

More than 700 million people still live in extreme poverty, many of whom are in areas facing severe water scarcity. Without water, livelihoods collapse — from agriculture to small-scale businesses — deepening economic vulnerability and inequality.

Interventions on water and sanitation must therefore aim to break this vicious cycle. Targeted policies, infrastructure investments, and inclusive governance in water can simultaneously uplift communities from poverty and strengthen water resilience. **Water actions that expand access, improve resilience, and enable sustainable livelihoods will be key to eradicating poverty** as the greatest global challenge.

2. Water for Zero Hunger

Ensuring water for zero hunger is not only about addressing present challenges – it is also about safeguarding future food security. Today, **around 70% of freshwater withdrawals globally are used for agriculture and food production, yet over 735 million people still face hunger, and 2.4 billion experience moderate or severe food insecurity**.

This paradox highlights the urgent need for sustainable water management in agriculture. Water scarcity is already a key driver of food insecurity, affecting over 40% of the world’s croplands. Policies that improve irrigation efficiency, promote climate-resilient crops, and integrate water-smart technologies can directly enhance food security.

Looking ahead, **global food demand is projected to increase by up to 50% by 2050** due to population growth, **requiring a 35–60% increase in water resources for food production**. This means that more sustainable water use today is the only pathway to secure food for tomorrow.

3. **Water for Good Health and Well-being**

Water is the foundation of health — both as an intrinsic human need and as a prerequisite for healthcare systems. Lack of access to safe and clean water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) continues to claim lives every day. Water-borne diseases, that can be prevented through access to safe and clean water and sanitation, kill over 500,000 people annually — including more than 700 children under five every day.

Moreover, **nearly one in five healthcare facilities globally lacks basic water services, and two in five lack soap and water for handwashing**. These gaps severely undermine progress toward SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and exacerbate vulnerabilities during pandemics and other health emergencies. Without ensuring universal access to water, sanitation, and hygiene — both at the household level and within healthcare systems — SDG 3 will remain out of reach.

4. **Water for Quality Education**

In many parts of the world, the lack of water is a major obstacle to achieving quality education for all. Millions of children — especially girls — are forced to spend hours fetching water, limiting school attendance and perpetuating gender disparities. Schools without adequate water and sanitation facilities further discourage attendance, and pose health risks to children.

Conversely, education is also a powerful enabler of sustainable water use. **Curricula that integrate water literacy can foster behavioral change, build community stewardship, and promote innovative water solutions.**

Efforts must therefore be directed at: (i) Ensuring water access to support quality education for all; and (ii) Strengthening education that empowers communities to manage water sustainably.

5. **Water for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of All Women and Girls**

Water is essential to ensure gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. Women and girls bear a disproportionate burden of water scarcity and disasters. In water collection, globally they spend an estimated 200 million hours daily fetching water. This not only limits their access to education and employment but also exposes them to health and safety risks. In water related-disasters, women and girls are also among the ones who disproportionately affected by the impacts.

Ensuring equitable access to water and sanitation is thus essential to advancing SDG 5 (Gender Equality and the Empowerment of All Women and Girls). It frees women's time for, and empower them to grow through education, entrepreneurship, good health, and leadership.

Furthermore, **empowering women as decision-makers in water governance leads to more sustainable and inclusive outcomes**. Women empowerment policies, in this regard, must take into account water as an essential element — from planning and budgeting to implementation and monitoring. Water perspective in women empowerment policies must aim not only to relieve burdens shouldered by women and girls, but also to empower women and girls as agents of change in water agenda. Ensuring strong water perspective in women empowerment policies automatically puts women at the centre of development policies.

6. **Water for Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions**

Water is a development necessity, based upon its recognition as a fundamental human right. Recognized by the UN General Assembly in 2010 as a human right essential for the full enjoyment of life and all other rights, access to safe drinking water and sanitation is foundational to human dignity, equality, and justice. Yet today, **water and sanitation remain one of the most unfulfilled rights of our time**, with 2.2 billion people still lacking access to safely managed drinking water and 3.5 billion lacking safely managed sanitation.

The denial of water and sanitation disproportionately affects vulnerable groups — including women and girls, persons with disabilities, older people, and those living in poverty. It deepens social exclusion, fuels inequality, and undermines good governance. When water is scarce, contaminated, or inequitably distributed, it becomes a development challenge that disrupts justice and governance issue — exacerbating grievances, disempowering communities, and eroding social cohesion.

This is why the recognition to safe drinking water and sanitation as a fundamental human rights is a powerful driver for sustainable development. **Ensuring that water agenda is mainstreamed in all human rights issues will elevate efforts for the promotion and the protection of human rights**. In this sense, realizing the human rights to water and sanitation contributes as a development imperative, that serves as a cornerstone for peaceful, just, and inclusive societies.

C. STRATEGIC CROSS-CUTTING SOLUTIONS

- **Highest political recognition to water as a pillar to sustainable social development.**
 - ➔ Water and sanitation agenda are recognized as key pillars of Indonesia's social development agenda, integrated into the Short-, Mid-, and Long-Term National Development Plans under Presidential Decree.
 - ➔ Implementation is carried out collaboratively by multiple ministries and national agencies to ensure coherence and continuity across programs.
 - ➔ Water resilience is identified as one of the main priorities under the President's Asta Cita Vision (Eight Visions) framework.
- **Strengthening data and evidence on the water-social development nexus.**
 - ➔ Invest in robust data systems and integrated indicators that demonstrate the linkages between water and key dimensions of social development — poverty, hunger, health, education, gender equality, human rights, and peace.
 - ➔ Use this data to evaluate and improve the inclusion of water and sanitation in national and global development agendas, inform progress tracking on Agenda 2030, and guide investment and policy decisions.

- **Promote and support water advocates and champions**
 - ➔ Integrating and elevating water issues within broader global agendas.
 - ➔ Consistently embed water considerations across diverse fields, such as poverty, food security, health, education, gender equality, and human rights, under the social development agenda.

D. GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. **To what extent is water currently recognized globally as a key pillar of the social development agenda?**
2. **How well has water been mainstreamed into other global agendas such as poverty eradication, food security, health, education, women empowerment, and human rights?**
3. **What evidence demonstrates the strong interlinkages between SDG 6 and SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 16?**
4. **What steps are being taken to strengthen water's role as a foundational pillar of these goals?**

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INPUTS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA THE 2026 UN WATER CONFERENCE – INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

“WATER FOR PROSPERITY”

A. INTRODUCTION

Water is the foundation of development and growth. Beyond being a basic human need, it is a strategic economic asset that sustains prosperity. Safeguarding water resources and strengthening water resilience are essential to sustaining and achieving economic development, one of the pillars of sustainable development. Water resilience ensures key sectors—energy, industry, employment, infrastructure—and helps reduce inequality.

From powering industries and agriculture to sustaining cities and inclusive growth, water drives economies and shapes progress. As the world transitions toward sustainable, inclusive, and low-carbon pathways, water must be recognized as both the foundation and engine of long-term prosperity.

While water cuts across all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), this Interactive Dialogue must, among others, focus on the nexus between SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and SDG 7 (Clean Energy), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure), and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities).

B. STATUS, CHALLENGES AND EMERGING ISSUES

1. Water for Affordable and Clean Energy

Water is a powerful economic driver, particularly through its role as a source of affordable, clean, and renewable energy. **Hydropower generates nearly 60% of global renewable electricity**, providing reliable baseload power and stabilizing energy grids. In many developing countries, water-based systems remain among the most cost-effective sources of electricity, supporting industrial growth, job creation, and rural electrification. **With half of the world’s viable hydropower potential still untapped, water remains central to sustainable economic growth.**

Water also underpins emerging clean energy technologies. Green hydrogen, a key solution for decarbonizing heavy industries and transport, depends on water electrolysis.

Harnessing water’s renewable energy potential offers vast economic opportunities. Expanding water-based energy systems can reduce dependence to fossil fuel, stabilize energy costs, attract green investment, and create millions of jobs.

To realize this potential, policies must promote water efficiency, protect ecosystems, and balance competing needs. When managed sustainably, water becomes a catalyst for the clean energy transition — driving both prosperity and growth.

2. Water for Decent Work and Economic Growth

Development in the water sector generates jobs, income, and innovation — from agriculture and manufacturing to services and tourism. Globally, **over 40% of jobs depend directly on water**, and all economic activity relies on it to some extent. Reliable

water supply sustains industries, agriculture, tourism, and fisheries, while expanding access to water and sanitation remains one of the most cost-effective ways to stimulate local economies, attract investment, and create inclusive employment.

Conversely, water scarcity and declining quality threaten growth and productivity. **The World Wildlife Fund estimated in 2023 that 60% of global GDP depends on water and freshwater ecosystems**, while the World Bank and OECD project that water scarcity could reduce regional GDP by up to 6% by 2050 through lower agricultural yields, disrupted energy and industrial production, and health impacts on workers.

At the same time, **the water sector faces a talent crisis**. About half of its current workforce is expected to retire within a decade, while too few young professionals are entering the field. This shortage risks slowing innovation, weakening infrastructure management, and constraining future economic growth.

3. **Water for Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure**

Globally, industry is the second-largest user of freshwater after agriculture, accounting for about 19% of total withdrawals. Any disruption in water supply or quality can halt production and cause cascading losses across value chains. Water scarcity and water-related disasters also increase infrastructure risks, threatening essential services and public well-being.

At the same time, global water infrastructure requires urgent attention. Many supply systems, wastewater facilities, and industrial networks are outdated or deteriorating, particularly in developing countries. The World Bank estimates that USD 6.7 trillion in investment will be needed by 2050 to meet demand and sustain economic activity. **Underinvestment risks widening service gaps and heightening economic uncertainty as water systems struggle with population growth, urbanization, and climate change.**

Strengthening investment in modern and innovative water infrastructure is therefore critical to boost efficiency, reduce costs, and open new markets. For instance, **water reuse and recycling technologies can cut industrial water demand by 30–80%.**

4. **Water for Reduced Inequalities**

Water inequality drives economic inequality. Communities and businesses facing water scarcity endure higher costs, lower productivity, and fewer opportunities. Gaps between countries are stark: **in least developed countries, only 27% of people have access to safely managed drinking water, compared to 99% in high-income nations.**

Within countries, the poorest are hit hardest. In many rural areas, households spend hours each day collecting water—time that could otherwise support education or income-generating work.

Closing these gaps requires inclusive water governance at all levels—local, national, regional, and global. Ensuring universal access to safe, affordable water and sanitation must remain a core priority, supported by stronger investment in sustainable water infrastructure.

C. STRATEGIC CROSS-CUTTING SOLUTIONS

- **Promote the establishment or strengthening of cross-ministerial coordination mechanisms on water**
 - ➔ This enables comprehensive alignment of water policies and actions, particularly those linked to economic development.
 - ➔ In 2024, the Government of Indonesia established the National Council on Water Resources to coordinate water-related policies and actions across ministries and agencies. The Council reports directly to the President of the Republic of Indonesia.
- **Promote the understanding that water is an active economic driver**
 - ➔ Investment in water is not a burden, but a catalyst for sustainable and inclusive economic growth.
 - ➔ Engage and empower the private sector to place water at the core of business processes.
 - ➔ Encourage private sector participation in supporting governments to strengthen and expand water infrastructure through a people-centred approach.

D. GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. **How strong is global recognition of water as an active driver of economic development?**
2. **To what extent is water recognized as a pillar of economic growth and sustainable development?**
3. **What evidence demonstrates the strong links between SDG 6 and SDGs 7, 8, 9, and 10?**
4. **What steps are being taken to position water as a foundational pillar of these SDGs?**

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INPUTS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA THE 2026 UN WATER CONFERENCE – INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

“WATER FOR PLANET”

A. INTRODUCTION

Water is the foundation of environmental sustainability and planetary resilience. It is a strategic natural asset that sustains ecosystems, regulates the climate, and supports life on land and below water. Safeguarding water resources and strengthening water resilience are essential for sustainable development in its environmental aspect, including through biodiversity protection, climate action, sustainable cities, and the well-being of present and future generations.

From sustaining wetlands, forests, and oceans to buffering climate extremes and shaping sustainable urbanization, water is vital to maintaining ecological balance and planetary health. As the world faces the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, water must be placed at the center of the global response — not as a competing priority, but as a unifying force linking climate action, nature protection, sustainable cities, resource efficiency, and disaster resilience.

While water cuts across all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), this Interactive Dialogue must, among others, focus on the nexus between SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and SDGs 11 (Sustainable Cities), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), 13 (Climate Action), 14 (Life Below Water), and 15 (Life on Land). It should also integrate water-related disaster risk management as a key part of strengthening resilience.

B. STATUS, CHALLENGES AND EMERGING ISSUES

1. Water for Sustainable Cities and Communities

Water is central to the resilience and sustainability of cities. It is vital for drinking, sanitation, and public health, and underpins all aspects of urban development. **Rapid urbanization, however, is intensifying pressure on water resources.** By 2030, global urban water demand is projected to exceed supply by 40%, and by 2050, over 2.4 billion urban residents could face water scarcity.

Water-related disasters are already the most frequent and costly emergencies affecting cities, accounting for about 95% of infrastructure losses worldwide. **Integrating water and disaster perspectives into urban planning is therefore essential to reduce disaster risks,** sustain development gains, and improve livelihoods in urban areas.

2. Water for Responsible Consumption and Production

Unsustainable water use and pollution undermine sustainable production and consumption systems. **Industrial processes, agriculture, and domestic use together release over 80% of untreated wastewater** into rivers, lakes, and coastal waters, degrading ecosystems and threatening water quality. By 2050, manufacturing, energy,

and urban growth are expected to increase demand for water by 55% — creating greater pressure on water resources more than it already is.

Transitioning to circular water economies — where water is reused, recycled, and recovered — is critical for achieving SDG 12. Water-efficient technologies can reduce industrial water demand by 30–80%. Wastewater reuse can supplement water supply, recover nutrients and energy. Furthermore, it can reduce pollution strengthen wastewater management. Responsible water use across supply chains also reduces the water footprint of goods and services, enabling more sustainable patterns of production and consumption.

3. **Water for Climate Action**

The impacts of climate change are felt primarily through water. **More than 90% of climate-related disasters are water-related** — from floods and droughts to storms and sea-level rise. Changes in precipitation patterns, melting glaciers, and shifting global water cycles are disrupting water availability and quality – and consequently threatening agriculture, energy, health, and ecosystems.

At the same time, water plays an important solution for climate mitigation and adaptation. Water preservation and protection policies will contribute in ensuring healthy wetlands, peatlands, mangroves and other water-related ecosystems. They store vast amounts of carbon. On the other hand, efforts such as water-smart agriculture and water-efficient energy production reduce is evident to reduce emissions. Strengthening water governance, investing in water-resilient infrastructure and water-responsive policies, as well as protecting water-related ecosystems can significantly enhance climate resilience and reduce the impacts of climate change. Without water-resilient policies, SDG 13 will remain out of reach.

4. **Water for Life Below Water**

Water connects land and sea. Rivers transport nutrients to coastal and marine ecosystems, shaping their health and productivity. Unfortunately, in many instances, rivers also transport pollutants from land causing around 80% of marine pollution.

Freshwater systems influence ocean circulation and climate regulation. Healthy river basins and wetlands will ensure reduction of pollutants and support the life cycles of many marine species. Protecting and restoring freshwater ecosystems is therefore essential to achieving SDG 14 (Life Below Water). Integrated water and coastal management, upstream pollution reduction, and nature-based solutions are key to sustaining healthy oceans and the livelihoods they support.

5. **Water for Life on Land**

Terrestrial ecosystems depend on water for their survival. Growing water stress and recurring droughts are degrading these ecosystems, endangering biodiversity and the vital services they provide. Since 1970, wetlands — which store more carbon than all the world's forests combined — have declined by more than 35%, largely due to worsening water challenges.

At the same time, water related ecosystems in land contribute to regulate hydrological cycle, that regulate the flow of water. Regular water-cycle through blue and green water, in turn contributes to soil fertility, food production, and many other things. Protecting them is essential for achieving life on land and sustaining the livelihoods of people.

C. STRATEGIC CROSS-CUTTING SOLUTIONS

- **Strengthen political commitment to protect and preserve water-related ecosystems at local, national, and global levels**
 - ➔ Indonesia initiated the UN General Assembly Resolution on World Lake Day (27 August) to promote greater understanding and stronger commitment to safeguard lakes as vital water sources.
- **Ensure high-level political recognition that water is the foundation of environmental resilience**
 - ➔ This can be advanced through the integration of water issues across environmental and climate agendas.
- **Promote investment in nature-based solutions and water-related ecosystems, guided by national strategies**
 - ➔ Encourage circular water use and integrated water resources management.
 - ➔ Indonesia's National Wetlands Strategy and ambitious mangrove and peatland restoration programs aim to restore ecosystems and enhance water resilience.
 - ➔ The National Urban Development Policy also prioritizes water resilience, coordinated by the National Council on Water Resources within national development planning.

D. GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. **How can water be more strongly recognized as the foundation of environmental sustainability and the fight against the triple planetary crisis?**
2. **What examples best illustrate the links between water and climate action, biodiversity protection, sustainable cities, and resource efficiency?**
3. **How can integrated water governance accelerate progress toward SDG 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15?**
4. **What innovative policies, financing models, and partnerships are needed to restore water-related ecosystems and strengthen planetary resilience?**

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**INPUTS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA
THE 2026 UN WATER CONFERENCE – INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE**

“WATER FOR COOPERATION”

A. INTRODUCTION

Water is key to unlocking cooperation. While SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) includes targets and indicators on cooperation for water, there is still a need to strengthen its nexus with SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

International cooperation on water and sanitation should fully leverage on the implementation of SDG 17 as an enabler to accelerate progress across all SDGs. In this regard, the Interactive Dialogue should focus on enhancing the link between SDG 6 and SDG 17, particularly in areas of finance, technology, capacity-building, multi-stakeholder partnerships, data, and accountability.

B. STATUS, CHALLENGES AND EMERGING ISSUES

1. Financing for Water

Financing for water and sanitation remains significantly inadequate. **Developing countries face an annual funding gap of USD 131–140 billion to achieve universal access to water and sanitation.** Innovative financing mechanisms, such as blended finance, and investment pipelines remain underdeveloped, while public budgets are increasingly constrained.

Bridging this gap requires stronger global partnerships, supports from international community to developing countries, and new models of partnership that combine public, private, and philanthropic capital. Instruments such as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and regional water investment compacts should be scaled up to mobilize resources more effectively.

2. Transfer of Technology

Technology and innovation are indispensable to address water challenges — from climate-smart water infrastructure and digital water management to circular water systems. Yet **access to such technologies remains uneven and often unaffordable for developing countries.**

Discussions on water cooperation should prioritize technology transfer and innovation partnerships to enable all countries to manage water challenges effectively. **North–South, South–South, and triangular cooperation, while not substituting international cooperation is vital to this effort.**

3. Capacity Building

Institutional and human capacities are critical to transform finance and technology into impact. Many countries still lack technical expertise in water governance, planning, and

service delivery, while existing capacity-building efforts remain fragmented, project-based, and short-term.

Future cooperation should support systematic, long-term capacity development through training programs, support to policy planning, and peer-to-peer exchanges.

4. **Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships**

Water cooperation cannot be achieved by governments alone. Partnerships among governments, international organizations, civil society, the private sector, academia, and local communities are essential.

To maximize impact, **cooperation must be built on inclusive, transparent, and accountable partnerships aligned with national priorities and global goals**. A new model of collaboration—engaging the private sector, academia, philanthropies, civil society, women, and youth—can harness diverse expertise and ensure collective progress toward water and sanitation for all.

5. **Data and Accountability**

Reliable data and accountability mechanisms are essential for effective cooperation. Yet, **large gaps persist in water-related data, especially in low-income countries, hindering evidence-based decision-making and progress tracking**. Moreover, existing accountability mechanisms for global water commitments remain weak.

Strengthening global water data systems, enhancing national statistical capacities, and ensuring transparent monitoring of international cooperation are critical priorities.

C. STRATEGIC CROSS-CUTTING SOLUTIONS

- **Strengthen the implementation of commitment at international level** on financing, technology transfer, and capacity building for water and sanitation to developing countries.
- **Track and promote the efficient use of the existing financial and capacity building support for water at the international level**
 - ➔ The Non-Aligned Movement Centre for South-South Technical Cooperation (NAM-CSSTC), hosted by Indonesia, can be leveraged to strengthen technical capacities in water governance, disaster risk reduction, and climate adaptation—demonstrating how developing countries can lead global capacity-building efforts.
- **Strengthen national mechanism and instruments on financing for water**
 - ➔ Indonesia's National Water Financing Roadmap (Peta Jalan Pembiayaan Air Nasional) under Vision 2045 aligns public spending, PPPs, and climate finance to accelerate water infrastructure investment—a model that could be scaled and replicated globally.

D. GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. **How strong is the implementation of international cooperation commitments in the water agenda?**
2. **To what extent has SDG 17 been integrated into discussions on SDG 6?**

3. What actions can accelerate SDG 17 implementation to support the achievement of SDG 6?

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INPUTS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA THE 2026 UN WATER CONFERENCE – INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

“WATER IN MULTILATERAL PROCESS”

A. INTRODUCTION

Water is not only a global agenda that needs dedicated attention in multilateral frameworks; it also connects and unites all other agendas across multilateral processes— from sustainable development, women empowerment and gender equality, disaster risk management, financing for development, health, to human rights. Water is both a goal in itself and a measure of how effectively multilateralism delivers tangible benefits to people’s lives.

Yet as global challenges grow more complex, multilateralism has not fully met expectations in addressing water issues. Over 3.6 billion people face annual water scarcity, 2.2 billion lack safe drinking water, and 3.5 billion lack safely managed sanitation. With 95% of disaster-related damages linked to water, global losses reached over USD 550 billion in 2024 — evidence of a systemic challenge that demands stronger collective action.

Progressive multilateralism — rooted in solidarity, shared responsibility, and collective action — is the only way forward. To succeed, water must be elevated from a cross-cutting concern to a strategic pillar of multilateral cooperation. This means aligning fragmented initiatives, enhancing institutional coherence, embedding water in global governance, and building a robust global water architecture — not as an afterthought, but as a defining priority of the 21st century.

B. STATUS, CHALLENGES AND EMERGING ISSUES

1. Fragmented Multilateral Landscape

Global water governance remains fragmented across multiple platforms, conventions, and initiatives — from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UN Water Conferences, World Water Forums, to regional water weeks. While each contributes to the collective global efforts of advancing water, **the absence of an overarching framework has led to duplication, inefficiency, and limited impact.**

This fragmentation hampers global efforts to mobilize resources, scale up solutions, and coordinate actions across borders. The UN System-Wide Strategy on Water and Sanitation (CIP 2025–2028) is an important step toward greater coherence — especially within the UN System, but stronger integration is still needed to embed water fully within the multilateral system and provide clear guidance and reference point for Member States on the implementation of water efforts.

2. Water as a Connector Across Global Agendas

Water is the common denominator linking climate resilience, food and energy security, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, health, and human rights. Yet, multilateral negotiations often treat these issues in silos and underlook the role of water in these issues. **This disconnection prevents the kind of integrated responses necessary for systemic transformation, especially in water agenda.**

Embedding water as a connector in multilateral processes — from the Pact for the Future and Summit of the Future, Second Summit for Social Development, to the 2026 UN Water Conference, and many other processes — will enable more coherent, cross-sectoral strategies.

3. **Preparing for the Future of Water**

Today's water challenges mirror and magnify those of the future. Climate change is accelerating glacier melt, altering rainfall patterns, and intensifying droughts and floods. Urbanization and population growth are straining infrastructure and ecosystems. By 2050, global water demand is expected to rise by more than 55%, while water-related disasters could displace hundreds of millions.

The future of water demands a future-oriented multilateralism — one that anticipates risks, invests in resilience, and embeds water resilience in long-term global strategies. As the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Water stated, "The future of water will define the future of humanity."

In this context, the Interactive Dialogue should discuss the future of water agenda, **including** post-2030 – addressing gaps in current global frameworks and advancing a coherent, integrated approach. It should also explore the possibility of a unified global water framework — one that sets shared principles, targets, and way forward for stronger coordination.

C. **STRATEGIC CROSS-CUTTING SOLUTIONS**

- **Draw lessons from existing frameworks** such as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, Paris Agreement, Sendai Framework, and Beijing Platform, among others.
- **Highlight the various perspectives offered by existing multilateral water processes** — including the World Water Forum, SDG 6, and the UN Water Conferences.
- **Decision to develop and discuss on a common global framework on water to address challenges comprehensively and move beyond siloed and fragmented approaches.**
 - ➔ This effort should build on the momentum toward 2030 and align water within the future development agenda, especially the post-2030 agenda (e.g., 2030–2045).

D. **GUIDING QUESTIONS**

1. **How effectively have multilateral water processes delivered tangible results on the ground?**
2. **What are the main challenges in mainstreaming and prioritizing water across global and multilateral agendas?**
3. **What lessons from other multilateral processes can help strengthen the global water agenda?**

4. **Can a timeline be set for discussing the future of the water agenda in parallel with the post-2030 sustainable development framework?**

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INPUTS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA THE 2026 UN WATER CONFERENCE – INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

“INVESTMENTS FOR WATER”

A. INTRODUCTION

Water is one of the smartest and most strategic investments the world can make. Every dollar invested in water and sanitation will generate return of up to 4 to 15 dollars, through higher productivity, stronger climate resilience, and wider socio-economic benefits. Yet, despite its transformative potential, water remains severely underfinanced.

The world is far off-track to achieve SDG 6. Today, 2.2 billion people lack safe drinking water, 3.5 billion lack safely managed sanitation, and 1.7 billion rely on contaminated sources. Water-related disasters cause 95% of disaster damages, with losses exceeding USD 550 billion in 2024 alone. The global financing gap for universal water and sanitation stands at USD 131–140 billion annually — and continues to widen.

Investing in water is a prerequisite and catalyst of progress across all SDGs, from health and food security to gender equality, climate resilience, and peace. The challenge is not only to mobilize more funding but to transform the way water is financed – shift from fragmented, short-term projects to coherent, long-term investment strategies that unlock water’s full potential for people, prosperity, and the planet.

B. STATUS, CHALLENGES AND EMERGING ISSUES

1. Under-Valuation of Water

One of the most persistent barriers to adequate investment is the chronic under-valuation of water. Despite being the foundation of public health, economic productivity, and ecosystem stability, water is often treated as a low-priority sector in public spending and private investment. This misperception contributes to systemic underinvestment and undermines the case for long-term financing.

Elevating water as a strategic asset, and not merely a social service, is essential. Investment in water infrastructure, services, and governance should be framed as an enabler of economic growth, social stability, and climate resilience, unlocking value across multiple sectors.

2. Fragmented and Short-Term Financing Approaches

Current financing models for water are often fragmented, project-based, and short-term in nature. It fails to address systemic issues such as water governance, institutional capacity,

and long-term maintenance, leading to inefficiencies and unsustainable outcomes. Additionally, **financing instruments are often not tailored to the specific risks and characteristics of water projects**, discouraging private-sector participation.

Transitioning toward programmatic, system-wide financing — with clear pipelines of bankable water projects and blended finance mechanisms — will be essential to mobilize large-scale, sustained investment.

3. **Investing for Resilience and the Future**

The water challenges of tomorrow will be far more complex than those of today. Climate change is accelerating glacier melt, altering hydrological cycles, and intensifying floods and droughts. By 2050, global water demand is projected to rise by more than 55 %, while water-related disasters could displace hundreds of millions of people.

Investing now in water resilience is significantly more cost-effective than paying for disaster response later. Yet global investment patterns remain skewed toward reactive measures, underscoring the need for a fundamental shift toward anticipatory, resilience-focused investment.

C. **STRATEGIC CROSS-CUTTING SOLUTIONS**

- **Leverage multi-stakeholder partnerships to strengthen investment in water**
 - ➔ The private sector should play a key role in supporting countries to develop water infrastructure.
 - ➔ Civil society also plays crucial role in supporting the implementation of water initiatives and implementation on the ground.
- **Scale up financing efforts** by mobilizing both domestic and international resources for water investment.
- **Strengthen the enabling environment to attract investment in the water sector**, including by improving project bankability and ensuring clear, supportive regulations and policies.

D. **GUIDING QUESTIONS**

1. **What policy and governance measures are needed to position water as a national priority sector?**
2. **What good practices in innovative financing can be replicated to strengthen investment in water?**

3. How can multilateral development banks, international financial institutions, and donors adapt their instruments to better support governments and address the unique needs of water investment?

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