

Collective input from a coalition of organizations from the international water community to the Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh Work Programme on the Global Goal on Adaptation

29 April 2022

Given that the objective of the Adaptation Goal is to enhance adaptive capacity and resilience and to reduce vulnerability, with a view to contributing to sustainable development, the undersigned members of the international water community request that the consideration of water solutions to this end should be explicitly encouraged through the mechanism to be established for implementing the Global Goal on Adaptation.

Climate impacts do not recognize borders and are felt first and foremost through water—whether it's too much water, too little water, or too dirty water. It is now widely recognized that more effective water management, including on a transboundary basin level, will enable smarter climate adaptation. Building climate resilient and thriving communities, ecosystems, and economies is only possible with clean, reliable and accessible water resources and healthy freshwater ecosystems and wetlands. Establishing resilience within our water systems is, therefore, key to reaching our systemic climate adaptation goals and should be explicitly supported.

Just as mitigation depends on the global energy transition, adaptation depends on a transition to water security for all. However, the adaptation goal cannot be encompassed by one single, simple metric in the same way that the mitigation goal can be. Mitigation and adaptation are not equivalent exercises and should not be seen that way. What could be useful, however, would be to measure the presence or absence of climate risk assessment frameworks that take a water-centric approach in order to determine whether key institutions have the ability to measure and manage resilience tradeoffs.

More specifically, we recommend that the Global Goal on Adaptation:

1. Strongly encourages the definition of water action for climate adaptation and resilience by integrating targets for water and for enhanced conservation, restoration, and improved management of wetlands into NAPs, vulnerability assessments, Long-term Strategies (LTS), national biodiversity targets for healthy ecosystems, and monitoring and evaluation systems;
2. Be locally driven, where climate impacts are felt and where adaptation capacity, resilience and vulnerability look very different from one place to another. Locally led water-wise adaptation yields inclusivity, accountability and cooperation;
3. Makes water-wise climate financing more easily available for such actions to be implemented and maintained;
4. Considers the cross-cutting and transboundary nature of water and the co-benefits of water for communities, health and well-being, freshwater ecosystems and for other productive uses, such as for agriculture and energy production;
5. Recognizes that good decision-making for adequate adaptation responses in country depends on access and availability of good quality information;
6. Prioritizes the empowerment of women, youth and disadvantaged populations who are more vulnerable to climate change and disasters and are severely disadvantaged in relation to land and water tenure, finance, ICTs, and education, placing a disproportionate burden on them.

Everyone has a role to play in building a just, inclusive and climate-resilient future where no one is left behind. We believe water action is the key to that future. The international water community

stand ready to support parties to define and communicate their priorities, plans and actions for climate adaptation through water action.

We invite all Parties to actively engage in the preparations for the UN 2023 Conference on Water to be held in New York in March of next year.

Supported by:

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