Marrakech Partnership

UN Climate Change COP 28 Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Taking Stock of Climate Action on Water
"Hydrating Climate Action"

Concept Note

Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action

DATE: 10th December 2023
TIME: 10:00-11:00
ROOM: Arena 1 (Al Hur), Global Climate Action Hub, Blue Zone

Organized by SIWI, AGWA, IWMI, INBO with support from the Climate Champions Team and partners*

MP "Thematic": Water

Description	*The event will showcase recent signals of progress in water for climate across the globe. It will demonstrate tangible water solutions across the five impact areas of the Water Action Pathway to inspire more ambitious water action.* *The aim is to offer a cross-sectoral perspective that moves beyond thematic silos by including non-traditional water voices and the potential for non-state actors to broaden and deepen engagement globally. The event will include the launch of initiatives aiming to bolster resilience, boost nature-based solutions funding and calling for more actions from non-state actors.*
Headline	*Water plays an instrumental role in addressing climate challenges; neglecting the incorporation of freshwater strategies into mitigation and adaptation efforts could potentially hinder the achievement of the goals of the Paris Agreement.*
Suggested outcomes aligned to narrative	*1. Creation or continuation of multi-stakeholder coalitions and collective action across divides* *2. A collection of various water solutions for climate resilience* *3. Linkages to the UN 2023 Water Conference and Water Action Agenda*
Please let us know how your event will address the following:	*What has been the collective progress to date in the thematic areas of water related to the MPGCA work streams?* ***a) Mitigation*** ***2030 Breakthrough Goal: Water and wastewater services are fully decarbonised in 20 countries, by 2030.*** *The global water sector plays a significant role in contributing to approximately 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions, highlighting its crucial role in the transition to a net-zero emissions future, as reported by CDP. Decarbonizing the water industry, which entails lowering the carbon footprint of water-related processes, is a vital element in worldwide initiatives to address and mitigate the impacts of climate change.* *The Water Action Event will show that some progress has been made at the cities level according to Global Water Intelligence that is tracking this, however some of the targets set by utilities are for 2050.*

b) Adaptation & resilience (specify Sharm el Sheik adaptation agenda outcome)

OUTCOME 1: Restore 300,000km of rivers and 350 million hectares of wetlands by 2030.

Globally, monitored freshwater availability has plummeted by an average of 83% since 1970. Approximately, 64% of the world's wetlands have been lost since 1900, and only 37% of the longest rivers remain free-flowing. Protecting and restoring rivers, lakes, and wetlands are not adequately integrated into national policy and legislation across sectors. These freshwater ecosystems are crucial for agriculture, energy, infrastructure, and more, but their biodiversity loss and the need for restoration are often overlooked. This gap can be attributed to:

- *Limited technical capacity for science-based planning, governance, and policy integration.*
- *Insufficient funding for wetland, groundwater, and river/lake projects, requiring a shift in current investments and subsidies.*
- *Inadequate data and information on freshwater biodiversity status, target prioritization, and effective restoration methods. Non-state actors can play a role in data collection, financing, and implementation support.*

Several initiatives are working to close these gaps. For instance, The Freshwater Challenge, supported by WWF, IUCN, TNC, CI, WII UNEP, and the Ramsar Secretariat is an initiative, championed by the governments of Colombia, DR Congo, Ecuador, Gabon, Mexico, Zambia, and which aims to support, integrate and accelerate the restoration of 300.000 kms of degraded rivers and 350M Ha of degraded wetlands by 2030, as well as conserve intact freshwater ecosystems, including through transboundary cooperation, where appropriate. The Challenge aims to integrate and accelerate targeted interventions for rivers and wetlands into national plans, increasing overall investment in restoration and protection. Additionally, it's developing a global water tracker to centralize data on river and wetland restoration and protection.

COP28 Presidencies FWC event is focusing on State actors, suggestion to therefore to highlight how non-party actors are working towards this i.e. CEO Water mandate, Danone etc.

OUTCOME 2: WASH (Sanitation and Water for All) - Goal: By 2028 all communities living in the overlap of insufficient water, sanitation and hygiene access and high climate hazard exposure have been targeted with climate resilient water, sanitation and hygiene services.

People living in the overlap of insufficient access to safely managed WASH services, and high climate hazard exposure are extremely vulnerable to climate shocks and lack access to resilient WASH infrastructure as a resource to mitigate these negative climate effects. There is a need to prioritize people in WASH efforts, and a need to consider climate hazards when building new WASH infrastructure, ensuring its resilience to withstand shocks.

The UNICEF-WHO Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) has been tracking WASH progress globally since 1990, monitoring SDG indicators for drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene. The latest JMP report (July 2023) reveals that in 2022, 2.2 billion people lacked access to drinking water, 3.4 billion to sanitation, and 2 billion to hygiene services. Combining this data with climate hazards exposure is essential, and the JMP is exploring enhanced monitoring for climate resilience.

Building climate-resilient water and sanitation services requires broad expertise and collaboration beyond technical aspects. Governance structures, alignment with climate policies, and inter-sectoral coordination are often lacking. Integrating water policies with climate and other sectoral policies, ensuring collaboration, and monitoring progress are vital. Funding remains a challenge, especially for adaptation projects, which receive only 10% of climate water finance. Accelerating partnerships and collaborations across all levels is essential for effective and inclusive action.

	OUTCOME 3: Food-Water Nexus: Goal: At least 20 countries supported to enhance coherent national policy frameworks that integrate water planning to build transformative climate outcomes in agriculture (Resilience). *Agriculture, the largest freshwater consumer, depends heavily on water. Currently, global hunger affects over 820 million people, and according to IPCC's latest estimates, climate-related water risks could expose 80 million more to hunger by 2050. Integrated management is crucial to balance trade-offs and improve synergies between water and food production, creating climate- resilient water and food systems.* *Historically, international and national discussions on water and food have been fragmented and siloed. For instance, water was largely absent from the 2021 Food Systems Summit, and the UN 2023 Water Conference poorly represented food security with only 13% of voluntary commitments to the Water Action Agenda addressing food security. At the national level, the water-food nexus is rarely considered in a coordinated way in NDCS, NAPs or other national climate plans. This lack of coordination undermines progress in ensuring water and food security amid climate change, especially concerning community, economic, and ecosystem resilience. While local stakeholders recognize these linkages, it's vital to improve connectivity between policy communities at the national and global levels to align priorities, finances, and prevent maladaptation. This is especially true in NDCs and NAPs, where competing sectoral priorities can undermine one another when developed in isolation.*
	c) Means of implementation (Finance, Capacity Building, Technology Transfer) *<u>Sharm el Sheik Adaptation Agenda target:</u>* ***OUTCOME 4: Water investment (TNC) - Goal: By 2030, 1% of annual water sector spending (a 10- fold increase to $7 billion) is invested in nature-based solutions via watershed investment programs - like water funds – resulting in improved management and/or protection of 148K kilometers of rivers, 128K hectares of lakes and wetlands, and 2.9M hectares of land.*** *Insufficient funding poses a pervasive challenge for all water-related projects, but especially for investments in nature-based solutions related to restoration and conservation of rivers, lakes, wetlands, aquifers, watersheds, and lands. One of the major gaps in funding for nature-based solutions is finance for initial pre-feasibility and feasibility studies that are critical prerequisites to developing equitable, investment-ready projects.* *Watershed Investment Programs can build the track record that regulators and lawmakers need to prove the cost-effectiveness of NbS to address water security, biodiversity, climate, and socio-economic challenges. Additionally, fragmented governance arrangements and narrow remits of funders don't match with investment in nature-based solutions, which are often high in initial investment, long in their pay-back and creating co-benefits going beyond the remits of specific funders. Watershed Investment Programs can provide a convening platform for siloed stakeholders to improve collaboration, develop cohesive NbS investment portfolios that draw on synergies between their separate mandates, pool disparate funding to increase economies of scale, and fill information gaps that can help them make better management decisions. Finally, lack of data and information on the effectiveness of NbS often limits attractiveness for investors. Watershed Investment programs have strong monitoring, evaluation, and learning programs that track implementation and impact.*
	What are the <u>key barriers</u> and what are the <u>key enablers</u> to address this? ***Mitigation:***

- *Water management plays a significant role in mitigation efforts through both land- and water-based carbon sequestration and the reduction of GHG emissions related to delivering water supply, sanitation, and hygiene services.*
- *Increasing carbon capture and reducing methane emissions through restoration of degraded wetlands and peatlands, as well as afforestation.*
- *Altering irrigation regimes to reduce emissions from agricultural activities such as rice paddies.*
- *Adjusting irrigation practices to reduce standing water can free up water for other uses while reducing emissions from these fields and while not reducing farm productivity; and*
- *Improving water and land management practices at the catchment level to improve sequestration (through soil organic carbon), improved soil and water quality for other purposes and reduce climate impacts of fertilizer use through water and nutrient management.*

Adaptation:

- *Taking a landscape approach, which considers social, ecological and environmental dimensions, to implementing nature-based solutions that includes the interactions between forests, vegetation, soil and water, as well as between upstream and downstream regions and communities.*
- *Prioritizing sustainable green-grey water infrastructure, which mixes the conservation and restoration of nature (including natural coastal buffers such as mangroves and seagrasses) with conventional approaches (such as concrete dams and seawalls), to build flexibility and robustness into adaptation planning and investments.*
- *Increasing water quality and availability for different uses through wastewater reuse, and water swapping where higher water volumes are exchanged for higher quality and vice versa (e.g. farmers provided with higher volumes for agricultural use, and industry with higher quality for production).*
- *Water security, energy security and food security are very much linked to one another, meaning that the actions in any one particular area often can have effects in one or both of the other areas Embracing thinking on the nexus of water-energy-food supports reduction of the risk of maladaptation.*

Means of implementation:

- *There exists a significant gap between levels of funding going to water-related projects and programmes today, and estimated investment needs, which range from $182B to*

  $664B annually (overall finance for water, sanitation, flood protection, irrigation, and integrated water resource management). Further, even though overall development assistance has increased, funding levels for water-related development assistance have decreased by 12% since 2015 to $9.8B in 2021, posing a severe challenge to lower-income countries often most in need of support and most exposed to climate hazards.
- *The UN 2023 Water Conference catalyzed financial commitments to the global Water Action Agenda from public funds, multilateral development organizations, and private actors (e.g., $49B commitment by the US for climate-resilient WASH infrastructure,*

  $100B commitment from ADB, Danone launched Water Acceleration Blending Fund), yet water-related funding must be sustainably accelerated to meet its annual needs by 2030.
- *Ensure public finance (subsidies, fiscal funds) and incentives for private finance lead to nature-positive and net-zero economic activities.*
- *Enhance and make publicly available data, and best practices to address systemic risks*

	● *Tools, guidance and standards are now increasingly available for non-state actors to include nature targets into business plans and disclose risks, dependencies and impacts to nature, yet adoption, harmonization, and integration into national legal frameworks needs to grow.* ● *Mandatory disclosure of carbon emissions and targets that is based on unified, comparable frameworks of high-level, comprehensive metrics. ** **These messages were developed partly by the Water Pavilion partners for COP27 and through the SAA Taskforce.*
Participants	● ***Local actors, marginalized voices, and underrepresented groups*** *(indigenous people, women, youth and global south perspective) - often the first to experience the effects of climate change but seldom promoted in decision-making.* ● ***NGOs*** *- advocacy work and frameworks with a direct impact on water for climate* ● ***Governments*** *- representatives leading the integration of water in their climate change policies.* ● ***Academics and research institutions*** *- Bringing the scientific urgency to act now. Also, establishing the need to think holistically and to incorporate the interlinkages between water, food security and climate change.* ● ***Civil society*** *- who is advocating for climate action across sectors* ● ***Private sector*** *- including corporations with water/climate impact*
Logistics	*Room layout: GCA Zone Amphitheatre 1* *Capacity: 175 pax* *Davos style seating*

Prospective Agenda

Timing	***Session Description***	***Speaker suggestions Stakeholder group/voice, Name, title, organization, gender, geography***	***Notes / Format tips***
2 min	***Welcome & Introduction*** *Introduce the MPGCA developments and action post-COP27 (2030 Breakthroughs, SAA, Race to Zero, Race to Resilience) linking it to the Water for Climate Action Pathway and highlighting the important role of non-state actors in achieving this.*	***Moderator (TBC)***	
5 mins	***Opening remarks*** *Link to the Follow up on the 2023 UN Water Conference which was convened for the first time in 46 years in March 2023 as a mid-term review of the International Decade for Action.* ● *Assessment of climate related water commitments from Non-state Actors in the Water Action Agenda.*	***University of North Carolina (TBC)***	*Visualization/ statis tics of commitments from the WAA.*

15 mins	***Segment title: Protect and Restore*** *Format: Panel Discussion/Fireside chat style* *Maximum 3 panelists in total.* *Aim to feature examples and progress from the following impact areas in the Water Climate Action Pathway:* ● *Water resources & Ecosystems* ● *People - WASH & nexuses of Peace/Security/Health* *Also, to connect to the SAA Outcome 1 & 2.*	***Suggestion to feature speakers from:*** ● *WWF* ● *EcoPeace Middle East* ● *SWA, Aquafed or C40 – Sharm el Sheikh working group on urban water resilience.*	
15 mins	***Segment title: Produce & Reuse*** *Format: Panel Discussion/Fireside chat style* *Maximum 3 panelists in total.* *Aim to feature examples and progress from the following impact areas in the Water Climate Action Pathway:* ● *Water, Food & Agriculture Nexuses* ● *Water-Energy Nexuses* *Also, to connect to the SAA Outcome 3 and do a progress report on the 2030 Breakthrough.*	***Suggestion to feature speakers from:*** ● *East African Farmers Federation.* ● *IWMI - Solar Irrigation for Agricultural Resilience in South Asia (SoLAR-SA)* ● *Solidaridad - Transforming Investments in African Rainfed Agriculture (TIARA)* ● *Indigenous rep.* ● *Xylem who will formally launch a coalition of utilities and utility focused organizations to meet the 2030 Breakthrough.*	
		● *Urban water reuse in Jordan.* ● *Elior, Catherine Roe (CEO)*	
12 mins	***Segment title: Enablers and means of implementation*** *Format: TED style*	***Suggestion to feature speakers from either:*** *Finance:*	

	Maximum 1-2 presentations/examples. *Themes:* ● *Finance* ● *Innovation* ● *Capacity development* ● *Governance*	● *Continental Africa Water Investment Programme (AIP)* ● *Water Equity* ● *Resilience Rising* ● *Latin American Water Funds Partnership - Patricia Abreu Fernandez, Executive Director of Santo Domingo Water Fund* ● *British Investment Institute - Africa Water Infrastructure Development (AWID)* *Innovation:* ● *We are Family* *Works to amplify global youth leaders and can speak on water advocacy work around bringing science- backed initiatives into the real world. For example, a novel method to detect microbial contamination in water through AI.*	
3 mins	***Closing Remarks*** *Concluding remarks summarizing the outcomes of the session. Also linking back to the UN water conference this year, announcement of another one in a couple years and the upcoming 10th World Water Forum.*	***H.E. Razan Al Mubarak, UN Climate Change High-Level Champion for COP28 (female, Asia)***	