



## WMO OMM

World Meteorological Organization  
Organisation météorologique mondiale  
Organización Meteorológica Mundial  
Всемирная метеорологическая организация  
المنظمة العالمية للأرصاد الجوية  
世界气象组织

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Subject: "Water and Climate Coalition"

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am addressing you today to share information about the "Water and Climate Coalition" and to ask you to join this important initiative. The coalition was formed in response to the United Nations (UN) General Assembly's resolution 74/4, calling for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) implementation and the Global Acceleration Framework for SDG 6 - Ensure access to water and sanitation for all. It represents the World Meteorological Organization's (WMO) contribution to secure interconnected action on SDGs, water-related adaptation challenges and the climate and water-related disaster risk reduction aspects of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

In its initial phase, the coalition is a joint initiative of WMO and nine other UN organizations. It is now being opened for WMO Members as well as the economic sector and civil society. Please refer to [Annex I](#) Background Information and [Annex II](#) Background Information on Water and Climate Leaders. An initial webpage [www.water-climate-coalition.org](http://www.water-climate-coalition.org) contains basic information about the coalition's purpose and the next steps and gives the possibility to register as an active member of the coalition.

I am working with UN executives to pull together an action plan to improve monitoring systems, operational capacity, to devise fit-for-purpose data policy, management and information flow and to improve our capacity to mitigate future water stress. I am proposing four initial commitments to support this:

- (1) One United Nations data and information system to support water, climate and adaptation;
- (2) Improved capacity building for operational hydrology;
- (3) Implementation of the WMO Hydrological Status and Outlook System (HydroSOS);
- (4) Scientific analysis of impacts of climate change on water availability.

This initiative is an important WMO strategic resource mobilization target, encouraging investments in hydrological monitoring and information systems for better service delivery. I hope that WMO Members will give the maximum boost to these activities and I am expecting to see new projects, activities and funding in support of the above.

To: Permanent Representatives of Members with WMO, Hydrological Advisers, Geneva Missions

WMO also strives to ensure that the current international high-level political processes on water and climate take into account what is important for our community in terms of operational hydrology, water management, nationally determined contributions to the Paris Agreement, national climate adaptation plans and disaster risk reduction through the organization of a group of water and climate leaders that will formally start working in 2021.

I should be grateful if you could disseminate this information widely within your network and join the coalition to co-design action and to harvest the benefit we can create when engaging together.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of fluid, connected strokes that form the name 'Petteri Taalas'.

Prof. Petteri Taalas  
Secretary-General

## Background Information

### **Why is participation in the Water and Climate Coalition beneficial?**

Currently the Sustainable Development Goal 6 - Ensure access to water and sanitation for all, is far from being achieved, and efforts to address resilient water adaptation to climate change are not yet providing the expected results.

Efficient and sustainable water solutions for food and energy require an adequate information base. How much water do we have now? How much will we have in the future? How will future availability and quality change over time?

Decision makers are faced with the same dilemma when it comes to flood and drought risks. Today, 60% of WMO Members report declining capabilities in hydrological monitoring and thus in the provision of decision support in the water, food and energy nexus. More than 50% of countries worldwide have no quality management system in place for their water-related data. Only about 40% of countries worldwide have good flood and drought early warning systems in operation. Political decision makers around the world lack a trustworthy information base in order to take decisions that have legal consequences on river basin scales. This situation is unacceptable in the twenty-first century and seriously threatens the sustainable development agenda.

The Water and Climate Coalition's unique feature is its operational approach to close the information gap in the water, food and energy nexus through focusing on concrete action and deliverables. Fit-for-purpose National Meteorological and Hydrological Services, working hand in hand with the private sector and society, embedded in regional and global information streams are a prerequisite for success. The Water and Climate Coalition objective is to ensure relevant capabilities and mechanisms are in place. In order to achieve this, the coalition engages and aligns different players to generate capacity, trust and momentum on a national, regional and global scale.

The Water and Climate Coalition supports the UN Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals through the UN-Water - SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework with a concrete action mechanism. The UN-Water framework defines the following five key areas for mobilizing engagement and ensuring alignment and accountability, not only for UN Agencies but also with, for and between members, the private sector and civil society:

1. Finances,
2. Data and Information,
3. Capacity Development,
4. Innovation, and
5. Governance.

## What is the purpose of the Water and Climate Coalition?

The Water and Climate Coalition is strengthening national capacities in the data and information pillar of the Global Acceleration Framework through:

1. Improved monitoring systems,
2. Fit-for-purpose data policies,
3. More efficient data management,
4. More effective open information flow,
5. Improved operational capacity of National Hydrological and Meteorological Services,
6. Improved integration of hydrological and meteorological systems and products,
7. Development and delivery of better information products in support of water management, and
8. Helping to understand and attribute changes in water availability now and in the future.

## Members

The coalition is composed of voluntary members. It is a non-bureaucratic, like-minded community and aims to create a movement rather than to function as a structure or an organization. Criteria for becoming a member are:

1. Being seriously committed to support the purpose of the coalition;
2. Adhere to the [ten principles of the UN-Global Compact](#).

Any party (a UN member state, a private sector entity, a national administration, an NGO...) can join the coalition by sending a communication to the coalition secretariat, hosted, on an interim basis, at the World Meteorological Organization. The secretariat can be reached at [waterclimatecoalition@wmo.int](mailto:waterclimatecoalition@wmo.int). Membership duration is self-determined and, as a general rule, linked to the duration required to implement activities. Membership will be communicated transparently on the coalition web platform that will be linked to the SDG action platform hosted by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA).

## How will the coalition work?

The coalition defines and implements activities that are developed through a cooperative approach and documented in its action matrix. It is the goal of the coalition to benefit from synergies of existing activities as well as to attract additional resources to address key country requirements.

## Activities

Members or groups of members of the coalition propose priority activities related to the purpose described above. These activities are listed, clustered and linked in the activity matrix which contains the goals, responsible lead implementors, partners, milestones, resources and planned schedules.

Activities can consist of projects, partnerships, knowledge or technology transfer, data, information systems, resources, calls and offers for joint monitoring, modelling, assessment and forecasting or any other activity supporting the purpose of the coalition.

Activities shall be aimed at and formulated to fulfil a specific goal. Activities should also explicitly contain milestones, a time frame and measures for success. The aim of the coalition is to create maximum benefit at a national, regional and global level; therefore, contributions should be formulated in a way that other partners of the coalition can benefit from supporting and joining a collective effort.

### **Accountability**

The coalition will link to UN DESA's SDG action platform to transparently communicate the contributions, list its members, communicate the action matrix and highlight progress. Progress in action is monitored by the members of the coalition, published on the platform and reported every six months to the water and climate leaders.

### **Milestones**

The coalition membership currently comprises of the following:

- World Meteorological Organization (WMO),
- United Nations University (UNU),
- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD),
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP),
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO),
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP),
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF),
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO),
- World Health Organization (WHO), and
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

December 2020: Opening of coalition for non-UN members

December 2020: First meeting of the advisers

2021: Formal inauguration of the water and climate leaders and first stocktake of the activity matrix during the Extraordinary World Meteorological Congress (dates subject to COVID-19 situation)

2021: Presentation of the coalition at the high-level water event at the General Assembly of the United Nations (UNGA)

2023: Providing data and information solutions and engagement possibilities to the UN Conference on the midterm review of the decade "Water for Sustainable Development".

## Background Information on Water and Climate Leaders

### **Water and Climate Leaders**

The Water and Climate Leaders come together in a panel composed of up to 15 eminent representatives of UN members, civil society and the private sector.

#### Mission

The goal of the Water and Climate Leaders is to pursue and advocate for changes leading to sustainable water management and water-related climate adaptation, to end siloed approaches to climate and water by means of setting up an integrated global agenda supporting both the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework and national mitigation and adaptation actions.

The Water and Climate Agenda will encompass outcomes and recommendations of the United Nations Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation (UNSGAB), the High-Level Panel on Water (HLPW), and the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace and is connected to the High-Level Experts and Leaders Panel on Water and Disasters. The Water and Climate Agenda will define potential elements of informed cooperative action that will ensure that the SDG 6 and the climate agenda are integrated and achieved.

#### Impact

The Water and Climate Leaders will:

- Develop and promote the transformative, action-oriented Global Water and Climate Agenda based on country needs, the principles of the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework for implementation and the focus defined in the Nationally Determined Contributions to the Paris Agreement;
- Advocate for political action at the highest UN and national levels;
- Inform the public on the main climate and water-related challenges and possible integrative solutions;
- Guide the Water and Climate Coalition on priorities for its action.

#### Milestones

- Inaugurate the panel officially at the Extraordinary World Meteorological Congress in 2021;
- Introduce the Water and Climate Leaders and the agenda setting the implementation plan of the Water and Climate Coalition at the UN High-level Event on Water in 2021 in New York;
- Present the aspirations and benefits of an integrated global Water and Climate Agenda to the 2023 UN Conference on Water and define steps to synergize existing actions to support a common global Water and Climate Agenda.

#### Modus operandi

The members are invited by the WMO Secretary-General through a consultative process coordinated by WMO for a renewable (if needed) term of three years. The membership is non-transferable. The members agree on procedure and organizational matters. Members will be supported logistically by WMO which will function as the secretariat of the panel. WMO will help

the Water and Climate Leaders keeping an overview on planning of activities, results and impacts and provide a communication and an investment expert to prepare outreach material.

A potential support group is expected to be resourced by the members of the panel.

## **Advisers**

The Water and Climate Leaders are supported by an expert group that is dealing with technical aspects and advises the Water and Climate Coalition.

### Mission

The advisers support the coalition and provide information for the Water and Climate Leaders to advocate for urgent climate and water-related action. The advisers also serve as the custodians of the matrix of action of the coalition.

### Impact

- Taking stock of the coalition and its progress twice a year,
- Advising the members of the coalition on priority action areas and guide its development, based on feedback from the Water and Climate Leaders,
- Advising the Water and Climate Leaders on priority investment needs, and
- Informing on the progress of the coalition on a yearly basis.

### Tangible outputs

- State of the coalition report:  
The state of the coalition report is an executive summary of the status of implementation of the matrix of activities and will relate progress of the coalition to the overall SDG agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework.
  - Priority list for investments updated yearly:  
The priority list is based on a detailed evaluation of progress within the action matrix as well as a gap analysis that highlights unaddressed needs and requirements received throughout the year.
  - Stocktake on global water information capacity as input to UN governance processes:  
The panel presents key conditions and characteristics for successfully planning and organizing concerted action in the UN system and with partners.
  - Capacity-building programme on water and climate integration at national level.
  - Any other products the Water and Climate Leaders deem necessary.
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