



Concept Note

Side event at the United Nations 2023 Water Conference

“Identifying and bridging the capacity gaps to achieve water-related SDGs”

5:00-6:15 PM, 23 March 2023, Side event room 5, UN Headquarters, New York, United States

Background

While the world at large is halfway through addressing the 2030 Agenda, capacity gaps have emerged as a key constraint to driving the successful achievement of water-related sustainable development. Countries having problems with properly managing water resources have been experiencing a severe lack of capability from shortages of skilled human resources for decades¹. The good news is that there are emerging tools that can help those countries to self-assess their capacity for water management to plan and implement need-specific capacity building.

SDG 6 Policy Support System (SDG-PSS) is one of the useful tools for tackling the challenges of capacity development by generating up-to-date data on capacity assets, needs, and gaps at the level of SDG 6 indicators and translating data into policies. Water professionals and policymakers can use SDG-PSS as evidence for decision-making to assess their status of national capabilities and seek the need for capacity development toward water-related sustainable development.

Since 2016, SDG-PSS has been developed and advanced to produce evidence on the enabling environments of SDG 6 under the consortium project “Water in the World We Want”. The tool covers six policy critical components - Capacity Assessment; Finance; Policy and Institutions, Gender Mainstreaming; Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)/Resilience, and Integrity - based on detailed consultations with project partners and countries. As water experts enter data and information required for each component through a set of questionnaires, the Summary View is filled in with evidence generated by the tool.

The goal of SDG-PSS is directly in alignment with the objectives of the Water Action Agenda, the main outcome of the Conference, in terms of fostering national capacity enhancement to accelerate the implementation of SDG 6 by demonstrating strengths and weaknesses, missing data, and gaps across the tool’s components. With the “Capacity Assessment” Component, SDG-PSS enables decision-makers to identify the key capacities they have and the additional capacities they need to reach SDG 6 targets. Focusing on identifying and filling the capacity gaps to achieve water-related SDGs, this event will begin with an introductory talk on SDG-PSS followed by a moderated panel discussion featuring experts from Brazil and South Korea; an open discussion stemming from panelists’ contributions; and

¹ Sinan Küfeoğlu, Emerging Technologies – Value Creation for Sustainable Development, pp. 289-304

conclusions/recommendations. This event will highlight a valuable opportunity to the project partners to announce a Water Action Agenda Commitment stemming from their work on SDG 6, particularly based on their experience of working in collaboration for the use of SDG-PSS.

Throughout the event, the organizers will be committed to building a collaborative partnership to expand the engagement of other Member States in using SDG-PSS to contribute to the Water Action Agenda and embrace geographical and gender balance representations with meaningful diverse participation.

Objectives:

This side event will contribute to

- (1) Enhancing awareness on the importance of capacity building in countries for timely achievement of SDG 6.
- (2) Introducing SDG-PSS as a pertinent tool to create evidence on the enabling environment including capacity development around the SDG 6.
- (3) Sharing and discussing experiences, challenges, and lessons learned from Brazil and the Republic of Korea on building national capacity for water management at the national and sub-national level.
- (4) Accelerating SDG 6 achievement by submitting an ambitious commitment to the Water Action Agenda.

Organizers

This side event is co-organized by National Water and Sanitation Agency of Brazil (ANA), Korea Water Resources Corporation (K-water), United Nations Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD), UNU Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH), and UNESCO International Centre for Water Security and Sustainable Management (UNESCO i-WSSM).

Schedule and Format

The side event will be held in-person on 23 March 2023 (5:00-6:15PM, EST) at UN Headquarters in New York, United States. The entire event will be conducted in English.

Participants

The side event is expected to have the presence and engagement of the country representatives, government officials, policymakers and experts from international, national, and subnational institutions and other stakeholders in water sector concerned with the implementation of SDG 6.

Agenda

Agenda (Tentative)	
5:00–6:15 pm, Thursday, 23 March 2023	
Moderator: Chaela Shin, Associate Research and Policy Development Expert, UNOSD	
Time	Content
5:00~5:05 (5')	Opening Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mr. Chun Kyoo Park, Head of Office, UNOSD
5:05~5:25 (20')	Introductory session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Speaker - Mr. Seo Hyung Choi, Senior Programme Specialist, R&D team, UNESCO International Centre for Water Security and Sustainable Management (UNESCO i-WSSM), - Ms. Yujeong Kim, Senior Sustainable Development Officer, United Nations Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD)
5:25~6:05 (40')	Panel and open discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Addressing challenges and opportunities in capacity development at the international, national and institutional level in achieving water-related SDGs.</i> ● Moderator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Manzoor Qadir, Deputy Director, UNU Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH) ● Panelists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms. Fernanda Abreu Oliveira de Souza, Advisor, National Water and Sanitation Agency of Brazil (ANA) - Mr. Yong Hwan Kim, General Manager, Global Cooperation Department, K-water - Ms. Edeltraud Guenther, Director, UNU Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources (UNU-FLORES) - Mr. Bartel Van de Walle, Director, UNU Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology (UNU-MERIT)
6:05~6:15 (10')	Announcement of Water Action Agenda Commitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Speaker: Mr. Kaveh Madani, Director, UNU-INWEH