International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" 2018-2028



Recommendations

Headline Recommendation

UN member states and other stakeholders are encouraged to use the UN Water Action Decade as a platform for policy dialogue, exchanges of best practices, and building partnerships to address water issues at all levels.

Detailed Recommendations (Transboundary Water Governance)

• Governments are encouraged to devote each year of the Water Action Decade to a water-related issue outlined in this document.

Challenges

Todays world faces a lot of water challenges such as lack and inequality of access to safe drinking water, lack of access to basic sanitation and sound hygiene practices, return of untreated wastewater back into the environment, threat of water scarcity to food and energy security, and increased economic losses due to water-related disasters. These challenges decelerate achievement of sustainable development goals.

These conditions along with water scarcity and water pollution constitute major challenges for the international community, in particular, for developing countries. Increasing water related disasters, climate change, urbanization, population growth, desertification, and drought along with the lack of capacity to ensure integrated water resource management further exacerbates this situation.

According to some estimates, by 2050 over 50% of the global population may be living under water stress, and 45% of the world's gross domestic product may come from water-stressed regions. Climate change will increase the variability of water supplies and reduce snowpack, which, in many regions of the world, serves as the only source of water storage.

At the same time, water is critical for sustainable development and the eradication of poverty and hunger, and is indispensable for human development, health, and wellbeing. Guaranteeing sustainable water management is a vital element of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and other relevant goals in the social, environmental, and economic fields.

Goal 6 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development aims to ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all by 2030. The Goal includes eight interlinked targets, covering safe drinking water and sanitation, waste water, water efficiency, water resources management, ecosystems, and water-related means of implementation. At the same time 16 of the 17 SDGs are water related, including a target to substantially reduce water-related disasters in Goal 11, and climate change adaptation in Goal 13. Without proper resolution of water issues, their achievement will also be complicated.

Principles for approaching the problems

To support efforts in the implementation water-related goals and targets the UNGA adopted a Resolution 71/222, which proclaims the period from 2018 to 2028 an International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development". The Decade will commence on World Water Day, 22 March 2018, and conclude on World Water Day, 22 March 2028. The main objectives of the International Decade of Action "Water for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028" should include a greater focus:

- On the sustainable development and integrated management of water resources for achieving social, economic and environmental objectives.
- On the implementation and promotion of related programs and projects.
- On furtherance of cooperation and partnership at all levels, in order to help to achieve internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Implementation of the goals and objectives of the Decade will be based on the principles of enhanced cooperation and partnership with all stakeholders including UN Member States, related UN agencies, UN-Water and UN Group of Friends of Water, international and regional organizations, multilateral development banks, the private sector, academic institutions. and others.

Contributions of the Panel

In view of that, the HLPW members will contribute to:

- Promotion of the International Decade of Action "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018-2028 through awareness raising, promoting relevant activities, and supporting the decision making.
- Motivation of effective actions and assistance in mobilizing financial and other resources for water-related projects and programs.
- Creation of national mechanisms or use of existing ones to coordinate the Decade's activities.
- Organization of conferences, seminars and other events at national and international levels to follow-up and monitor the implementation of the Decade's activities.
- Launching lighthouse and other initiatives at the national level, which could make a significant contribution to this process.

Findings and conclusions

The Decade provides a unique opportunity and platform to draw attention and raise awareness in accelerating efforts and actions to achieve the internationally agreed water-related goals, including SDGs. Respectively:

- The HLPW calls upon the international community to take advantage of the Decade to address water issues at all levels in order to achieve sustainable development and organize events to follow-up and monitor the implementation of the Decade;
- The HLPW encourages advocacy, communication and public awareness to promote the International Decade serving the implementation of SDG6 and related targets and involve greater number of stakeholders, including women, children and youth in this process, as well as calling upon all stakeholders to promote these activities at the local, national, regional, and international levels.
- The HLPW calls upon governments, UN agencies, international and regional organizations, financial institutions, the private sector, and other stakeholders to further strengthen and expand within the framework of the Decade, cooperation and partnerships that play an important role in addressing water issues.
- The HLPW calls upon governments to devote each year of the Decade to one of the water related issues, including water and women (gender equality), to bring greater focus and advocacy to address them at different levels.
- The HLPW calls upon UN member states and other stakeholders to consider the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028" as a platform for policy dialogue, exchanges of best practices, and building partnerships to address water-related issues at all levels.