

WATER & THE 2030 AGENDA



WATER & POVERTY

Access to adequate and affordable water and sanitation services can contribute to an upward spiral of prosperity and well-being, and is an essential route out of poverty for individuals and communities, thereby leading to ending poverty in all its forms everywhere.



WATER & FOOD

Agriculture is the largest consumer of the world's freshwater resources. In the face of climate change, access to water could make or break much needed transformation of food systems to end hunger and ensure food and nutrition security for all.



WATER & HEALTH

Contaminated and polluted water and the heavy burdens of water collection have serious and preventable health impacts, including various diseases, illnesses, and injuries. Safe and readily available water is important for public health, whether it is used for drinking, domestic use, food production or recreational purposes.



WATER & EDUCATION

Traveling to access water for household use reduces the amount of time children spend in the classroom – leaving gaps in school attendance. Preventable sickness and lack of menstrual hygiene are also barriers to education. Increasing access to water means that children all over the world can spend more time enjoying the education they are entitled to.



WATER & GENDER

Women and girls are disproportionately affected by water issues. Women and girls face increased risk of violence when traveling long distances to access sanitation or running water. It is essential to recognize and value the contribution of women and girls to water management, and enable them to fully participate in decision-making.



WATER & SANITATION

The lack of clean water is an obstacle to development for a large part of the world's population, especially the most vulnerable. To accelerate the kind of urgent and effective action needed to achieve the 2030 Agenda, we must recognize the central role of water as a catalyst for action and progress across all SDGs.



WATER & ENERGY

There is a clear interdependence between water and energy. Most sources of energy require water in production, e.g. for cooling, and as such are a major user of water. Wastewater from the energy sector can release large quantities of thermal and chemical pollution into water bodies.



WATER & DECENT WORK

Water shortages and lack of access may limit economic growth in the years to come. In order to achieve "full and productive employment and decent work for all," removing barriers such as increased sickness due to poor sanitation, or needing to spend time collecting water rather than at work or in education is essential.



WATER & INFRASTRUCTURE

If innovation is to be inclusive, it cannot worsen existing issues such as water stress. Considering water when innovating and developing infrastructure will help ensure that nobody is left behind. To achieve SDG 9, companies will need to look beyond the “business-as-usual” and pursue plans to grow differently.



WATER & INEQUALITIES

Vulnerable communities are often hardest hit by water scarcity, yet have little power in the decision-making processes which affect them. SDG 6 can only be achieved if the rights of women and marginalized people are fulfilled. Water, and access to it, is key to ensuring that SDG targets do not widen gaps in equality.



WATER, CITIES & COMMUNITIES

To survive the climate crisis, cities and communities must be resilient. In order to build resilience, water systems are fundamental – from better buildings, new early-warning systems and smarter planning, protecting aquatic ecosystems as buffers against flooding, and investing in wastewater treatment.



WATER, CONSUMPTION & PRODUCTION

Unsustainable growth and consumption is leading to more severe and frequent water-related disasters and worsening environmental degradation. Responsible production requires reducing the use of water, and safely managing wastewater at the end of the production process.



WATER & CLIMATE

Climate change is exacerbating risks to ecosystems and humans, with increased intensity and frequency of storms, floods, and droughts. Responses to climate change also impact water resources and hydrological processes. We need to prioritize rights-based water management that let us both adapt to climate change and reduce its impact.



WATER & OCEANS

As the largest aquatic ecosystems, oceans play an important role in climate regulation, on livelihoods, and food security. Improving water quality and wastewater management will help to reduce marine pollution and protect vital ecosystems. Water action is essential to sustainably restoring and maintaining ocean health.



WATER & EARTH

Threats of species extinction, deforestation and loss of biodiversity all continue to trigger climate change. Healthy water systems are crucial to maintaining biodiversity. Aquatic ecosystems such as wetlands, estuaries and forests on the margins of rivers are especially rich with species, and must be protected and maintained.



WATER & PEACE

Exclusion, scarcity and unequal distribution of water can fuel social instability and conflict in many areas of the world. Conflict over water has increased drastically, making transboundary water cooperation and strong governance crucial to minimizing conflicts and their consequences.



WATER & PARTNERSHIPS

Water is a connector and an enabler that helps us address all the biggest global challenges of our time. Therefore, cooperation is required across geographical, political, economic and social boundaries. Only by working together with a unified focus can we, with the help of water, achieve a more sustainable future.

