

SDG 6 Special Event 2026

Tuesday 7 July, 15:00-18:00

Conference room 12, UNHQ, New York

Background

The Chair of UN-Water and the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs will co-host the sixth annual SDG 6 Special Event during the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) launching the [UN SDG 6 Synthesis Report on Water 2026](#) and three SDG 6 Country Acceleration Case Studies (China, São Tomé and Príncipe, Uzbekistan) as well as hosting a panel discussion with 2026 UN Water Conference Co-hosts and Co-chairs.

Peer-to-peer learning on SDG 6 country-level implementation is emerging as a potent tool to strengthen multilateral cooperation. To facilitate this type of exchange, UN-Water is launching its fifth iteration of the SDG 6 Country Acceleration Case Studies, showcasing practical examples of successful policies from China, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Uzbekistan. High-level representatives will share best practices facilitated by the UN Development Coordination Office, which oversees the Resident Coordinator System. To align with the HLPF SDG 6 in-depth review, UN-Water is launching the UN SDG 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation 2026. The Report reflects on a decade of

implementation exploring how SDG 6 has driven action at both national and global levels. Looking ahead, the Report asks “what comes next” and outlines how momentum generated behind SDG 6 can shape the water and sanitation agenda going forward. It offers a set of recommendations on how the international community can shape the vision in the years leading to 2030 and beyond.

The third segment of the SDG 6 Special Event focuses on the upcoming 2026 UN Water Conference with a panel discussion among the Conference co-hosts (Senegal and United Arab Emirates) and co-chairs. The conversation will dive into the six interactive dialogue themes which constitute the substantive basis of the Water Conference. The focus will be how the observations and recommendations made in the UN SDG 6 Synthesis Report 2026 can inform the dialogues which will take place this December in the United Arab Emirates.

Draft Agenda

Event Master of Ceremonies, Paola Deda, Director, Environment and Forests Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Opening (15:00 – 15:25)

Welcoming Remarks

- Li Junhua, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs
- Rania Al-Mashat, Executive Secretary of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia – Introduction and launch of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report 2026
- Alvaro Lario, Chair of UN-Water and President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (video address)

Keynote

- Retno Marsudi, UN Secretary-General’s Special Envoy on Water

High-level Launch of the SDG 6 Country Acceleration Case Studies (15:25 – 16:15)

Moderated by Mireia Villar Forner, Deputy Director and Director of the Division for Strategic Partnerships and Engagement, UN Development Coordination Office

China – rural drinking water (6.1), São Tomé and Príncipe – drinking water and sanitation (6.1 and 6.2); Uzbekistan – water use efficiency (6.4)

SDG 6 Case Study Overview

SDG 6 Case Study Presentations

- Yu Qiyang, Chief Planner of the Ministry of Water Resources of China; and Li Rui, Director General of the Department of Water Resources of Zhejiang Province, China
- H.E. Hon Nelson Cardoso, Minister of Infrastructure and Natural Resources of São Tomé and Príncipe
- H.E. Butunbayev Timur Nuryigitovich, Deputy Head of the Administration of the President of Uzbekistan

Discussion: First Respondents

- Member States: H.E. James Browne, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage of Ireland
- UN System: Evariste Kouassi-Komlan, Director, Water and Sanitation Practice of the United Nations Children's Fund

UN SDG 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation 2026 Launch (16:20 – 16:55)

- Joakim Harlin, Chief Manager of the United Nations Environment Programme-DHI Centre on Water and Environment and Coordinator of the UN-Water Expert Group on the 2030 Agenda
- Lifeng Li, Director of the Land and Water Division of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
- Sofie Sandstrom Jaffe, Permanent Observer of the International Union for Conservation of Nature to the United Nations

2026 UN Water Conference – Panel Discussion with the Conference Co-hosts and Co-Chairs (17:00 – 17:55)

Moderated by Meike van Ginneken, Water Envoy for the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Overview

2026 UN Water Conference Co-hosts representatives of Senegal and United Arab Emirates

Panel Discussion with a focus on UN SDG 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation 2026 recommendations

2026 UN Water Conference Interactive Dialogue Co-chairs

Interactive Dialogue (A) Water for People (Ghana and Switzerland)

H.E. Ambassador Christian Frutiger, Assistant Director General of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) of Switzerland

Interactive Dialogue (B) Water for Prosperity (China and Spain)

Xu Jing, Deputy Director General of the Department of International Cooperation, Science and Technology of the Ministry of Water Resources of China

Álvaro Díaz Duque, Deputy Director for Development Cooperation of Spain

Interactive Dialogue (C) Water for Planet (Egypt and Japan)

H.E. Ambassador Ihab Moustafa Awad Moustafa, Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations

Kenzo Hiroki, Professor Emeritus and Adjunct Professor of the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) of Japan

Interactive Dialogue (D) Water for Cooperation (Finland and Zambia)

Antti Rautavaara, Special Envoy for Water of Finland

Interactive Dialogue (E) Water in Multilateral Processes (Germany and Mexico)

Ilka Hirt, Deputy Director General for International Affairs of Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) of Germany

Interactive Dialogue (F) Investments for Water (France and South Africa)

H.E. Hon Pemmy Majodina, Member of Parliament and Minister of Water and Sanitation of South Africa

Closing Remarks (17:55 – 18:00)

H.E. Jonibek Hikmat, Permanent Representative of Tajikistan to the United Nations