



UN
2023 WATER
CONFERENCE

NEW YORK
22-24
MARCH
2023



UN 2023 Water Conference
UNWTO Side Event
“Water and Tourism: Challenges and Opportunities”
With the Government of Austria, World Travel and Tourism
Council and Sustainable Hospitality Alliance
23 March 2023
18:30 - 19:45, Room CR 6
UN Headquarters, NY

Background:

In 1977, world leaders, water experts and policymakers from around the world gathered in Mar del Plata, Argentina, for the UN Water Conference. In a few days, almost 50 years later, the global community will come together in New York for the second ever [UN 2023 Water Conference](#). Formally known as the 2023 Conference for the Midterm Comprehensive Review of Implementation of the UN Decade for Action on Water and Sanitation (2018-2028) the conference will take place at UN Headquarters in New York, 22-24 March, co-hosted by Tajikistan and the Netherlands.

This Conference is not only a unique opportunity for the world to come together and accelerate and scale the collective action achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6 and all other water-related goals and targets. It is a once-in-a-generation chance to get the world on track for a water-secure world for all, everywhere.

The outcome of the UN 2023 Conference will be a summary of the Conference proceedings and new commitments, pledges and actions by Governments and all stakeholders towards achieving SDG 6, compiled in the [Water Action Agenda](#). The Agenda is a collection of water-related voluntary commitments and action across countries and sectors to meet the global water and sanitation related goals and targets. Therefore, all sectors, including tourism, must put water at the centre of

World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) - A Specialized Agency of the United Nations

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their action plans to ensure sustainable water management at all levels.

Introduction

Water is a key resource in tourism and services to tourists are very dependent on it. Water can become a constraint to sustainable development, especially when water is a scarce resource. While new innovative water supplies can be difficult to obtain and costly (e.g. import, desalinization), conservation is one means to reduce or mitigate demand (e.g. recycling waste or grey water). In addition, the management of liquid waste (sewage) is a key concern for tourism as pollution of the key resources- beaches, rivers and lakes- can be a major concern for tourism, not only degrading the destination and harming the local communities, but also contributing to disease and damage to wildlife and natural resources. While tourism accounts for a minor share of global water use in comparison to agriculture, the tourism sector is operating in areas with limited freshwater availability. This causes challenges but also opportunities as the tourism sector, if well planned and managed, can also contribute positively to a conscious use of resources. The recently launched alliance between UNWTO, WTTC and SHA for a Nature Positive Travel & Tourism Sector, stresses the sector's commitment but also ability to contribute to positive change in destinations. Therefore, all sectors, including tourism, must put water at the centre of their action plans to ensure sustainable water management at all levels.

Agenda

15 min	Opening Remarks Mrs. Zoritsa Urosevic, Executive Director, UNWTO H.E. Mr. Norbert Totschnig, Federal Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management of Austria
45 min Interactive Panel Discussion	<u>Moderator:</u> Mrs. Cordula Wohlmuther, Coordinator, Sustainable Development of Tourism, UNWTO <u>Panelists:</u> ❖ Mrs. Zoritsa Urosevic, Executive Director, UNWTO ❖ Mr. Michael Gigl, Head of Market USA, Austrian National Tourist Office ❖ Mr. Christopher Imbsen, Director of Sustainability, World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) ❖ Mr. Glenn Mandziuk, CEO, Sustainable Hospitality Alliance (SHA)



5 min	Closing remarks and outline next steps for the UNWTO, WTTC and SHA alliance for a Nature Positive Travel & Tourism Sector including for the Water Action Agenda by the tourism sector
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Links:

[UN 2023 Water Conference | Department of Economic and Social Affairs](#)

[One Planet | UNWTO](#)

[UNWTO International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories](#)

