

Programme

Roundtable Discussion on: Water Cooperation for Accelerated SDG 2030 Agenda Implementation

When: Thursday 23 March 2023: 19:00 – 20:15.

Venue: Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations. Located next to the UN-Secretariat building at 1 Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza, 885 2nd Ave, 46th Floor, New York, NY 10017. For directions please click [here](#). Refreshments will be served.

Background: Water cooperation at cross-roads

Many countries are facing increasing challenges of social, economic, political and ecosystem risks related to too little, too much, and too polluted water. Water scarcity, water disasters and extreme weather events, such as floods and droughts, and failures of climate change mitigation and adaptation, continue to rank among top global risks as assessed in the Global Risk Report by the World Economic Forum (2022). Projections by OECD show that 40 per cent of the world's population currently lives in water-stressed river basins, and that water demand will rise by 55 per cent between 2000 and 2050. More than 40 % of the world's population currently lives in water-stressed river basins and increased pressures on water may displace as many as 700 million people by 2030.

Cooperation is identified as one very important aspect to meeting water challenges at all scales. Despite a lot of media focus on the role of water in conflicts, water rather unites people more often than it divides them, even though water management and governance tend to be very fragmented and facing gross cooperation deficits. Most countries as well as international multilateral systems are currently at cross-roads to what extent they will embark on a non-business-as-usual pathway – characterized by transborder cooperation across stakeholders, sectors, and scales - that can help them to accelerate SDG 2030 Agenda implementation. The United Nations Conference on Water, 22-24 March 2023, in New York, is a step in the right direction since it has identified water cooperation as one of its main inter-active dialogue areas.

The Roundtable event focuses on challenges and possible water cooperation solutions to shared waters across borders, sectors, stakeholders and scales. The session explores water cooperation preparedness of river basins and countries around the world. It addresses water cooperation gaps and opportunities at all levels, but with a special focus on transboundary water cooperation challenges and opportunities in Africa.

The event will introduce the Water Cooperation Global Outlook Initiative of the International Centre for Water Cooperation and highlight some initial lessons learned from the forthcoming (August 2023) *Water Cooperation Global Outlook Report*. The report assesses water cooperation status and trends at different scales and draws policy lessons from it. The session highlights cooperation challenges, water cooperation status, trends and innovations in 30+ transboundary water basins in Africa as well as from a global assessment of national and sub-national water cooperation. Based on the insights developed by a Working Paper on Water Cooperation *the Water*

Cooperation Global Outlook Report concept, the event promotes contextualized water cooperation solutions and innovations to national and international decision-makers and practitioners.

The Roundtable is part of and contributes to the [Water Action Agenda](#) of the United Nations Conference on Water, 22-24 March 2023. It feeds into the Inter-active Dialogue Area No 4 on Water Cooperation. The ICWC Water Cooperation Global Outlook Initiative provides basis for Voluntary Commitment on the promotion of water cooperation research, policy and capacity development and advocacy.

The event will deliberate on water cooperation and expected outcomes include insights and sharing of experiences related to: What makes contextualized water cooperation work in the first place; What does it take for countries to enhance water cooperation (e.g. in terms of governance, financing, data, political leadership); How is water cooperation at different scales connected? What role can the international multilateral system play to promote water cooperation?

Draft Programme

Water Cooperation for Accelerated SDG 2030 Agenda Implementation

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Venue: Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations, New York.

1. Opening of session by **Dr. Daniel Westlén**, State Secretary to Minister for Climate and the Environment Romina Pourmokhtari, Ministry of Climate and Enterprise
2. **Dr. Håkan Tropp**, Programme Director, SIWI / ICWC, Presentation of the forthcoming *Water Cooperation Global Outlook Report: Initial lessons learned on Water Cooperation*
3. Moderated roundtable discussion by **Ms. Karin Gardes**, COO, SIWI / Director ICWC.
4. Roundtable Participants:
 - **Mr. Phera S. Ramoeli**, Executive Secretary of the Okavango River Basin Commission (OKACOM)
 - **Dr. Abou Amani**, Director of the Division of Water Sciences and Secretary of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP), UNESCO.
 - **Ms. Viviane Kinyaga**, Programme Manager, The Orange-Senqu River Basin Commission (ORASECOM)
 - **Mr. Torgny Holmgren**, Executive Director, SIWI;
 - **Dr Callist Tindimugaya**, Commissioner for Water Resources Planning and Regulation, Ministry of Water and Environment, Uganda.

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About the Water Cooperation Global Outlook Initiative

The Initiative by the International Centre for Water Cooperation at SIWI:

1. Emphasises water **COOPERATION** and what makes contextualized cooperation work in the first place;
2. Focuses on country and water basin **PREPAREDNESS** of water cooperation, and
3. Highlights water cooperation at different **SCALES**.

The Initiative aims to:

1. **Assess & Learn:** Advance the knowledge on country and shared water basin preparedness for water cooperation and the mechanisms for improved cooperation on shared water resources at different scales.
2. **Seek & Support Solutions:** Support governments and other decision-makers on demand to advance on contextualized water cooperation policies, planning, capacity and stakeholder platforms.
3. **Advocate & Raise Awareness:** Contribute to water cooperation being on the agenda among key water decision-makers globally and in countries as means to accelerate national and international development frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, and Paris Climate Agreement.

Key-outputs of the initiative:

- ✚ *Water Cooperation Global Outlook Report:* A main output of the initiative is the annual report that assesses global water cooperation at different scales from transboundary waters to national and sub-national water cooperation. The report will have a global outlook, including regional deep dives on transboundary water cooperation. The first edition makes deep dive into the status of transboundary water cooperation in Africa. Ensuing editions will put focus on other continents.
- ✚ A range of *case studies, thematic reports* on water cooperation characteristics, *methodology report* and *policy briefs*.
- ✚ Development of demand-driven *policy advisory and capacity development tools and support* and *National Policy Dialogues on Water Cooperation*

The Initiative is supported by the governments of the Netherlands and Sweden. The Global Outlook Report is developed in partnership with Uppsala University and with case study contributions from GWP-SA, GWP-Med, IADB and other partners. The Initiative is open to bringing additional partners onboard to multiply case and thematic studies and benefit from worldwide experiences on water cooperation.

About the International Centre for Water Cooperation:

The International Centre for Water Cooperation (ICWC) is hosted by SIWI and a long-term cooperation with the Government of Sweden and UNESCO. It is a Category II Centre of the UNESCO International Hydrological Programme. The ICWC mission is to generate and share knowledge on the state, trends, and benefits of water cooperation and strengthen capacity of technical and political actors for increased cooperation on shared waters. For more information click [here](#).