

#CLIMATE IS WATER

- Water **connects** sectors – from energy and forests to agriculture and tourism, water has a critical role to play in both mitigation and adaptation
- Climate change **impacts** water resources first and foremost
- Women's** lives are the most impacted when facing the adverse effects of climate change, but they are also crucial agents of change
- Food security**, improved nutrition and health will only be achievable if there is water security
- Sustainable urban water management enables climate resilience in **cities**
- Water-wise climate **financing** is a good investment for all



Water connects sectors – from energy and forests to agriculture and tourism, water has a critical role to play in both mitigation and adaptation

Water is essential not only for basic needs and ecosystems, but for producing food and energy, and supporting livelihoods and industry. It also plays a role in the spiritual and aesthetic lives of billions of people. Water management is therefore not only an end in itself, but it also needs to be managed sustainably for many other uses across all sectors.

Climate change impacts water resources first and foremost

Climate change increases the intensity and frequency of natural disasters and water-related crises, including unpredictable rainfall and floods, water shortages and droughts. These situations further exacerbate the quality and quantity of available water and have potentially severe impacts to societies globally. Systematically addressing water issues is, therefore, key to adapting to climate change and reducing negative impacts of water-related disasters. In addition, water is critical for successful climate change mitigation, since many efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions depend on reliable access to water resources.

Therefore, systematically integrating efficient and sustainable water resource management into climate adaptation and mitigation strategies provides valuable solutions to Governments for the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Governments must make water figure prominently within their Nationally Determined Contributions, their National Adaptation Plans and other UNFCCC programs and mechanisms.

Women's lives are the most impacted when facing the adverse effects of climate change, but they are also crucial agents of change.

Women are key allies and the entry point for sustainable behavioral change in the water dimensions of climate adaptation and mitigation programs. Gender responsive climate policies and programs will deliver a high return on investment in the social, environmental and economic arena. Ensuring women's empowerment and engagement at all levels will encourage them to reach their potential as agents of change. Women are too often left out of governance processes; however, water management activities gain efficiency and impact when both women and men are involved in decision-making.

Food security, improved nutrition and health will only be achievable if there is water security

The agricultural sector accounts for approximately 70% of all withdrawn water, while food demand is ever increasing due to population growth. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, around one-third of all food produced for human consumption in the world is lost or wasted. Therefore, it is urgent to increase water efficiency for agriculture and curtail food loss as a means of improving both food security and water security. In addition, the agricultural sector will be significantly impacted by climate change, limiting crop productivity and reducing water availability in areas where irrigation is most needed. For this reason, efficient and sustainable water management is fundamental to preserve global food production and reduce hunger. Governments must integrate and enforce water-sound strategies within agricultural policy and management measures.

Sustainable urban water management enables climate resilience in cities

Cities are rapidly expanding and water resources are under increasing pressures. Moreover, local authorities need to safeguard their citizens from potential climate-related risks, arising from either too much, too little or contaminated water. To counter the effects of climate change in the context of rapid urbanization and increase resilience in cities, investing in both infrastructure and capacity development measures to improve access to safe drinking water and sanitation and increase water-related disaster preparedness will lead to healthier and more prosperous communities. It will enable cities to bounce back more quickly when disaster does strike. However, national and local governments need to enhance their collaboration so as to translate the implementation of national climate and water policies on the ground, closest to where water can be effectively managed.

Water-wise climate financing is a good investment for all

We cannot mitigate nor adapt to climate change without making major investments to improve our water security, either through traditional or innovative means. Hence, there is an urgent need to invest in climate-resilient infrastructure and services, to reduce the risks of climate change faced by society and economic sectors and to support low-carbon and climate-resilient growth. Given that every dollar invested in water and sanitation saves four dollars from being spent on public health costs, integration of the water and climate agendas would further improve cost effectiveness and therefore support financial commitments to create resilient societies and secure ecosystems. Additionally, to access climate funds, water projects need to respond better to climate criteria. Organisations and countries must fully understand the necessary requirements and use the right language in their proposals to respond sufficiently to what funding institutions are seeking.

#ClimatelsWater story and progress

The #ClimatelsWater initiative: hydrating the climate negotiations

#ClimatelsWater is an ongoing effort: our objective is to reach out to the climate community at every level for better consideration of water issues and incorporation of water within the action plans of the Paris Agreement, since it is not mentioned explicitly.

Since COP21 in Paris, where water issues entered into multi-stakeholder engagement processes (e.g. Lima-Paris Action Agenda), water is increasingly debated in popular and professional circles and is starting to feed into political and economic processes. At COP22 the collaborative action of members of the global water community has enabled COP22 to become a landmark in the history of the UN Climate Conference, making water much more visible within the climate debate.

#ClimatelsWater played a key role in this progress, forming a coalition of water partners from around the globe to speak with one voice for water. The initiative is formally endorsed by the COP23 Presidency.



If you think water deserves more attention in climate negotiations, support and join **#ClimatelsWater!**

