



DESA



Global Policy Dialogue Series

Version 11 March 2021

Building Food and Water Security in an Era of Climate Shocks

Building a Global Coalition for Sustainability after COVID-19 *Session 1 of the UN DESA Global Policy Dialogues for Climate Action*

Wednesday, 24 March 2021, 8:30-10:00 a.m. EDT

Background

In spring 2021, in line with the United Nations Secretary-General's priority to build a "global coalition for carbon neutrality,"¹ the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs is hosting a four-part series to discuss ways the world can place climate action at the heart of recovering better from the COVID-19 crisis. The series showcases key areas that the Department has been supporting to achieve the shared goals of the Paris Agreement on climate change and the 2030 Agenda. In monthly sessions addressing food and water security (March), energy and transport (April), forests and the ocean (May), and climate financing and digital solutions (June), the series will bring together leading voices in these fields with DESA's own experts to make the connections between these issues and discuss practical solutions.

The first session will look at how climate change is affecting people's access to water for sufficient, safe and nutritious food. Cross-cutting issues such as financing, governance, gender, energy, data and statistics also will be part of the discussion. As in previous Global Policy Dialogues, UN DESA will partner with the leading UN agencies working on these issues to present a full picture of the organization's work around the world. For this event, the Department will work closely with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), which is the specialized agency of the UN that leads international efforts to defeat hunger and the UN anchor agency for the UN Food Systems Summit Action Track 1 on "Ensure safe and nutritious food for all," as well as the UN World Food Programme (WFP), which is the UN anchor agency for the Summit's Action Track 5, "Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress."

Additionally, as UN DESA will invite leading experts working to implement Sustainable Development Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation to the discussion. The event also supports

¹ <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2021-01-11/secretary-generals-remarks-the-one-planet-summit-bilingual-delivered-scroll-down-for-all-english>

[World Water Day \(22 March\)](#), to be celebrated during the same week, and the Department's upcoming policy briefs on climate action and food security and nutrition.

To enhance engagement, participants will be invited to submit questions online at the time of registration and in the webinar and Facebook chat during the event. The results of the discussion will be shared with UN leadership and be used to support future UN DESA policy briefs on the economic and social impacts of the pandemic, pandemic recovery, and the Department's support to the Decade of Action. This event also will serve as a Food Systems Summit Dialogue and the summary will be submitted as an input to Action Tracks 1 and 5 and feed into the UN-Water Global Dialogue processes under the Food Systems Summit, including the April 27 Global Food Systems Summit Dialogue on "Water as the Game Changer for Food Systems Transformation".

Date and time

This session, the first of four dialogues in the series, will be held on Wednesday, 24 March 2021, from 8:30-10:00 a.m. EDT.

Location

The events will be held on UN DESA's Zoom account and streamed to UN DESA's [Facebook channel](#). Events will be held in English with live captioning available in six UN languages.

Moderator

The environmental journalist Fiona Harvey of The Guardian will moderate the event.

Event format

- I. Welcome** (2 minutes)
Mr. Liu Zhenmin, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs

- II. Keynote remarks** (5 minutes)
Dr. Qu Dongyu, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

- III. Discussion 1: Ensuring sustainable access to water and food for all in an era of climate shocks** (35 minutes)

Suggested panelists:

- **Ms. Cherie Atilano (Philippines)**, CEO and President of AGREA, an innovative and inclusive enterprise founded on fair trade and sustainable agriculture, and a UN Scaling Up Nutrition Lead Group member
- **Mr. Mark Gordon**, Head of Asset Creation and Livelihoods Unit, World Food Programme
- **Ms. Janya Green (USA)**, farmer and youth chair of Food Systems Summit Action Track 1.
- **Mr. Mike Khunga (Malawi)**, nutritionist with the Civil Society Organisation Nutrition Alliance and youth chair of Food Systems Summit Action Track 5.
- **Ms. Sasha Koo-Oshima**, FAO Deputy Director of Land and Water

Guiding questions:

- How are water scarcity, climate shocks, long-term drought, flood conditions and slow-onset climate events affecting food production, distribution and access to water for agriculture globally?
- What are some of the challenges faced due to the impacts of climate shocks, droughts and floods, especially by the most vulnerable people and regions?
- How can we ensure access to safe water and nutritious food for all in the face of shocks, vulnerabilities and stresses, while safeguarding nature and conserving our limited natural resources?

IV. Keynote remarks (5 minutes)

Mr. Gilbert Hougbo, chair of UN-Water and President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

V. Discussion 2: Innovative solutions for improving access to clean and safe water (35 minutes)

Suggested panelists:

- **Mr. Samir Ibrahim (Kenya/Tanzania)**, co-founder, SunCulture, a startup for solar-powered generators and water pumps in Africa
- **Ms. Tania Eulalia Martinez Cruz (Mexico)**, member of the Global Hub on Indigenous Peoples Food Systems.
- **Mr. Zahin Razeen (Bangladesh)**, founder of Hydroquo+, a startup dedicated to ensuring water security, and UN Young Leader for SDGs Class of 2020
- **Mr. Felix Reinders (South Africa)**, Chair of the Global Framework on Water Scarcity for Agriculture (WASAG)
- Representative of UN-Water or recommended speaker

Guiding questions:

- What are some of the documented good practices for improving access to clean and safe water and food that can be expanded at a larger scale?
- What innovative solutions are emerging in improving sustainable access to water and food, and building resilience at the community-level?
- What are some of the major obstacles and challenges to achieving this aim?
- How can Governments, the private sector, consumers and other stakeholders work together to ensure that water resources are used sustainably in a changing climate?

VI. Concluding remarks

Mr. David Beasley, Executive Director, World Food Programme