



HIGH-LEVEL PANEL DESCRIPTION(PROGRAM) FORM

10th WORLD WATER FORUM

This High-Level Panel Description Form is for the specified program of the session. Please complete this form no later than 28th of February 2024 and send it to hlp@worldwaterforum.org

HLP Session Code and Title:

HLP 11 Nature for Water: the business case for nature to deliver value for water security

Thursday May 23, 2024 14:50 - 16:20, Room 14

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HLP Session Description including objectives and expected outcomes:

Water resources are inextricably linked to the ecosystems which sustain the water cycle. In an era marked by rapid climate change, accelerating losses of biodiversity and degradation of lands and waters, the very ecosystems we depend on are under great strain, impacted by the very actions of water users themselves. There will be no water security without ecological security, and no ecological security without water security, thus no socio-economic security either.

This is a critical moment for the water sector to find common cause and shared narrative with conservation and climate actors to leverage their momentum and to inform their actions. Adopting integrated water resources management using a landscape approach, preserving intact ecosystems, restoring watersheds and their freshwater ecosystems, and optimizing green infrastructure investments (i.e., nature-based solutions) can be cost-effective means to advancing water security goals. The business case has become very clear at the river basin level, such as the Yangtze and Yellow River basins in the People's Republic of China, and cities as diverse as Sao Paulo, Nairobi, Quito and Cape Town. Nature-based solutions bring tangible benefits to water security, biodiversity, climate mitigation and adaptation, as well as rural livelihoods. Further momentum to be built from the [The Water and Nature Declaration](#), an initiative launched to strength the links between water practitioners and the nature community and foster a new level of collaboration. **The question is not if nature and water communities should align, but how to scale this alliance as quickly as possible.**

Objective: This HLP will examine success from both top-down and ground-up actions, revealing common challenges and breakthrough solutions to mainstreaming nature-based solutions in the water sector.

This HLP will showcase how government leadership and ministerial decision makers have leveraged efforts that meet national goals under the UN Rio Conventions on climate, biodiversity loss, and land degradation to also meet water security goals of UN SDGs. Panelists will include government Ministers, high-level officials, as well as the representatives at the intersection UN processes. Regional development banks, such as the Asian Development Bank, will be invited to describe how they are financing countries climate, biodiversity, and ecosystem restoration plans and where the intersection to water financing lies.

Additionally, panelists that work at the intersection of water supply, such as river basin organizations and water utility managers, will explore the how they have succeeded in creating the business cases for investment in nature, and have established long-term funding flows from public funding and/or rate payers. Major case studies from communities such as PRC, Cape Town and Sao Paulo are already showing the way. Regional alliances between nature and water leaders are now being built, such as the Africa Source Water Protection Alliance, supporting replication at scale.

Desired Outcomes:

- High-level panelists will discuss current commitments and upcoming initiatives along with plans of implementation and scaling progress. To include:
 - Natural Capital Fund and Nature Finance Initiative
 - Nature for Water Facility and Ground Outcomes Fund
 - Call for enabling policy and lending for NBS for water (and tease of findings of NBS for water enabling conditions paper)
 - Call to join the Freshwater Challenge ahead of One Water Summit in New York
- Participants will have an increased understanding on how natural ecosystems support a healthy, functioning water cycle critical to providing water security and the business case for investments in nature-based solutions.
- Participants will have an increased understanding of solutions already being used to overcome common challenges through the exploration of at-scale watershed investment programs across the world.
- Through validation of NBS by knowledgeable, passionate high-level speakers, participants will take action and build alliances with the biodiversity and climate sectors, supported with new resources to support investment in nature as a fundamental asset for greater water security.

Detailed HLP Session plan:

ESTIMATED TIMING	ITEM DESCRIPTION / ROLE	SPEAKERS	SPEAKERS STATUS (OK OR TBC)
0:00 – 0:09	Welcome & Introduction. Opening Remarks 5 min. Keynote Setting the Stage: 5 min. The case for investment in NBS for water security.	Brooke Atwell Henk Ovink	OK OK
0:10- 0:18	Presentation #1 5 min (+3 min) Focus on Indonesia commitment to conservation investments and the relationship to water security & meeting international commitments.	Suharso Monoarfa	Ok
0:19 – 0:25	Presentation #2 5 min: (+ 3 min Focus on Kenya’s commitment to meeting SDG6 with NBS and to the <u>Freshwater Challenge</u> .	Elizabeth Wathuti, Zachariah Njeru EGH.	TBC TBC
0:26– 0:34	PRESENTATION #3 – 5 Min +Transition: Yellow River Commission’s voice on the drivers, enabling environment, and justification for at-scale investment in ecosystems and grey-green (NbS) infrastructure and eco-system restoration.	Sun Feng,	OK
0:35- 0:39	Transition Moderated Wrap up.	Brooke Atwell	OK
0:40– 1:00	Panel #1 & Moderated Discussion: International Community discusses (i) how they see the demand is increasing for NbS and preservation/enhancement of natural capital for benefiting water security, (ii) why there is increasing demand, and (iii) how the international development community can help countries to scale up investments.	Barbara Pompili; Shahbano Tirmizi; Qingfeng Zhang;	TBC OK OK
1:01– 1:03	Transition Video: Field Voices video #2		
1:04- 1:24	Panel #2: & Moderated Dialogue: Water Sector Leadership (eg. public and private) will describe tangible experiences where the business case for Nature has led to meaningful change in strategy and material investment for water security outcomes.	Frédéric Van Heems Michael Webster Alonzo Zapata Cornejo	TBC OK OK
1:25- 1:30	Announcements on Commitments & Closing Remarks	Herlina Hertanto	OK