



SESSION DESCRIPTION FORM 2.

10TH WORLD WATER FORUM

This Session Description Form 2 is for the specified program of the session. Please complete this form no later than 28th of February 2024.

**The session description 1 (online form) is separately requested for the session coordinators to deliver a concise session outline with the contact info and the logistical requests.*

Session Code and Title:

T4E1: Transparent and accountable public participation for water management: where do we stand in national and international law?

Session Coordinators (Name, Position, Organization, email, mobile number):

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Session Description including objectives and expected outcomes (500 words maximum):

At the 2023 UN Water Conference, strong calls were made for more inclusive water governance and effective stakeholder engagement, especially in [Interactive Dialogue 5 on the Water Action Decade](#). Public participation in the field of water management should lead to an improvement in the quality and implementation of, and commitment to, decisions, as well as increased accountability, transparency and public awareness of water management issues.

At local and national scales, policy- and decision-making in water management on the basis of catchment areas are a matter of concern to both public authorities and the public at large. Public participation involves the rights of persons to take part in decision-making that affects them, and gives concrete benefits to decision-making.

At transboundary scales, water cooperation should be seen as a multitrack process that enables a diverse group of stakeholders to help establish the basis for sustainable transboundary water cooperation. Public participation and access to information and decision-making are included in some basin agreements, yet claims of a disconnect between what is written in the agreements and

the actual implementation in practice in basins have also arisen in some contexts. There is a need for stronger engagement of local stakeholders in activities of joint bodies for transboundary water cooperation, as such participation enhances the quality and acceptance of decisions and contributes to the transparency and accountability of decision-making processes at bilateral, multi-lateral, regional and global scales.

This session provides an opportunity to analyse current trends, challenges and innovative thinking in national and international water laws and institutions at different scales for the involvement of non-state actors, including vulnerable and marginalised groups, in the management of freshwater resources and hear differing perspectives on past, current and predicted future effectiveness as regards implementation.

Expected outcomes:

- A brief list of highlights and key messages from the session regarding effective public participation at all levels of water governance, including in international and national law
- A set of brief top-level recommendations from the session to carry forward in future for implementing more effective transparent and accountable public participation at all scales

Detailed Session plan :

ESTIMATED TIMING	ITEM DESCRIPTION / ROLE	SPEAKERS	SPEAKERS STATUS (OK OR TBC)
3 mins	Opening	Mr Remy Kinna	OK
7 mins	Keynote	Dr Susanne Schmeier	OK
50 minutes	Panel presentations (8 mins maximum each)	Ms Zara Loksala Vanzou (Youth representative, Chad) Civil society representative (South Asia, USA, Latin America, Europe TBC) Australia / Murray-Darling Basin Authority Switzerland (Ambassador Oliver Zehnder, Ambassador to Indonesia, Timor-Leste and ASEAN) Mekong River Commission (Ms Le Thi Huong Lien) Water Convention & Aarhus Convention (Ms Sonja Koepfel)	OK TBC OK (speaker TBC) Participating in WWF but TBC OK OK
25 Mins	Q&A with panelists	Mr Remy Kinna and Dr Susanne Schmeier (Audience and panel)	OK
5 mins	Summary & wrap up	Dr Susanne Schmeier	OK