

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Update on Water Action Decade Preparatory Process

Second Consultation in the Arab Region to prepare for the
2023 Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Water Action Decade
Beirut, 14 April 2021



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Water Action Decade: 2018 – 2028

In December 2016, UNGA adopted [Resolution A/RES/71/222](#) proclaiming the **International Decade for Action, Water for Sustainable Development, 2018 - 2028**, commonly referred to as the **Water Action Decade**



WATER
ACTION DECADE
2018-2028



Advance sustainable development and IWRM to achieve internationally agreed water-related goals and targets



Pursued through cooperation and partnerships at all levels, focus on social, economic and environmental objectives

In Dec 2018, UNGA [Resolution A/RES/73/226](#) to convene **UN Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the Water Action Decade** (New York, 22-24 March 2023)

- To report on progress made in implementing the Decade's objectives, identify obstacles, and pinpoint innovative ways to support their implementation and accelerate progress.
- The conference will be preceded by regional and global thematic meetings and include a review process, including report submitted by the UN Secretary General.

Regional Preparatory Meeting on Water (March 2018)

The **regional preparatory meeting on water** was organized by an LAS/AMWC Working Group (comprised of ESCWA, LAS, FAO, ACSAD, ACWUA, RAED, AOAD, AWC, CEDARE and UNEP) to prepare for the 2018 AFSD & HLPF and convened one week after the launching of the Decade (Beirut, 28-29 March 2018). The resulting **Outcome Document** consolidated regional views and priorities on water-related issues facing the Arab region.



Arab Priorities on Water for Sustainable Development per Outcome Document:

- (1) Strengthening **integrated water resources management** to cope with **water scarcity**;
- (2) Enhancing cooperation on **shared water resources**;
- (3) Water is a core component of **climate change adaptation and natural disaster risk reduction**;
- (4) **Access to water services** for all through **improving water-related infrastructure**.

Means of Implementation

- (1) Regional Cooperation
- (2) National coherence and coordination across sectors through participatory approaches
- (3) Technology transfer
- (4) Financing and investment
- (5) Capacity development

See: *Outcome Document of the Regional Preparatory Meeting on Water Issues for the 2018 Arab Forum on Sustainable Development and High-Level Political Forum (Beirut, March 2018)*

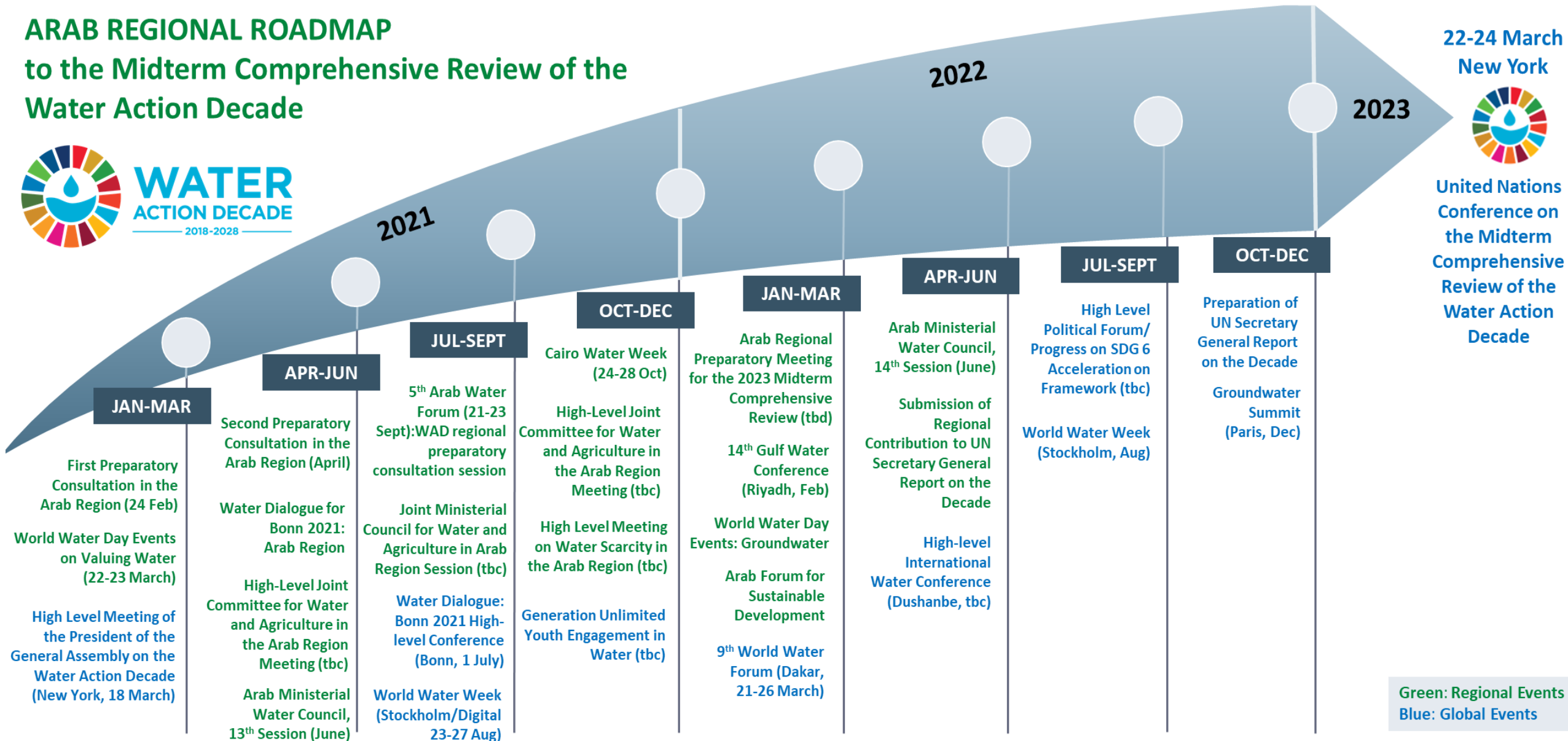
First Consultation to prepare Regional Roadmap (February 2021)

- ❑ The First Consultation in the Arab Region to prepare for the WAD 2023 Midterm Comprehensive Review was held online on 24 February 2021.

- ❑ All participating institutions expressed their full commitment to the WAD preparatory process. In summary, the following was agreed to:
 - **Hold the regional preparatory meeting in February 2022 as a tentative date.**
 - **The summary of the Arab regional report on the WAD will be used to inform the preparation of the report of the United Nations Secretary General to the WAD.**
 - **Short policy briefs (1-3 pages) with key policy messages generated from prior consultations and regional contributions to the WAD will help to inform the preparation of the regional meeting and report.**
 - **Consider a wider range of engagements than the usual stakeholders to ensure the process is as participatory as possible.**
 - **Prepare a Regional Roadmap of events and activities to raise visibility**



ARAB REGIONAL ROADMAP to the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Water Action Decade



Green: Regional Events
Blue: Global Events

34th UN-Water Meeting (15-17 March 2021)

The logo for UN-Water, featuring a stylized blue wave above the text "UN WATER" in a serif font.

The 34th UN-Water Meeting brought together over 120 representatives from Members, Partners, and observers

The meeting discussed:

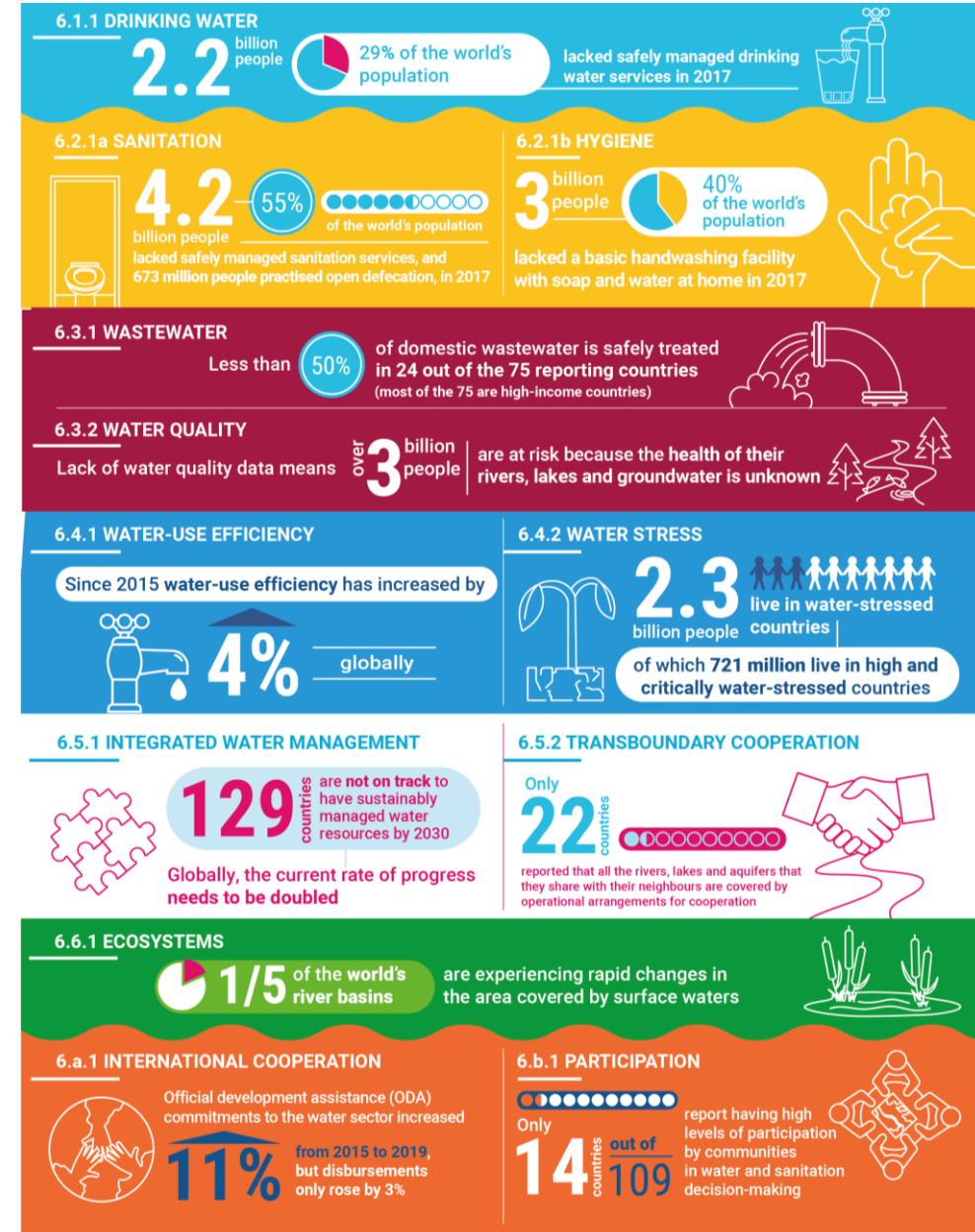
- 💧 The launch of the 2021 **Summary Report Update on SDG 6**
- 💧 Advancing the **SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework** in support of the WAD and UNSG global acceleration to implement the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development
- 💧 Preparations for the **PGA High-level meeting** on the Implementation of the Water-related Goals and Targets of the 2030 Agenda (18 March 2021)
- 💧 Other **series of meetings leading to 2023 Conference** on the Midterm Review of the Water Action Decade, including anticipated events to be organized by Tajikistan and Germany
- 💧 The **Arab Regional Roadmap** to the Midterm Comprehensive Review was shared and welcomed by UN-Water partners, within the context of the recently formed UN-Water Regional Discussion Groups

Launch of SDG 6 Summary Progress Update Report

Summary Progress Update 2021: SDG 6 – water and sanitation for all MARCH 2021

- ❑ The **SDG 6 Summary Progress Update 2021** report was prepared by the Integrating Monitoring Initiative on SDG 6 and launched on 4 March 2021.
- ❑ It provides the latest available country, region and world data on **all of the SDG 6 global indicators**.

The report reveals that **much work remains to be done** to achieve SDG 6 by 2030 and expresses concern that the data confirm **the world is not on track to meet SDG 6**



<https://www.unwater.org/publications/summary-progress-update-2021-sdg-6-water-and-sanitation-for-all/>

PGA High-Level Meeting (18 & 22 March 2021)

Presidency of the General Assembly Meeting Highlights:

- UN Deputy Secretary General Amina Mohammed highlighted three imperatives for action on SDG 6: using pandemic recovery plans to address the SDGs; raising ambition on climate action; and bringing more women decision makers.
- Statements from more than 85 Member States Officials/Delegations
- Panel discussions highlighted actions to scale up international cooperation and meet water-related goals



Main messages from the proceedings for the lead-up to the Midterm Review Conference:

- Call by Member States on the need to adopt a UN system-wide approach that integrates UN activities on water: most notably the WAD and the Global SDG 6 Accelerator Framework, within the framework of Midterm Review
- Need for including all people, particularly indigenous groups and young people, in innovative water solutions
- Connecting efforts on water to the need to prevent desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD)
- Closing gaps in data and observation systems, particularly by strengthening role of UN-Water as coordinator, and better engage private sector
- Scaling up financing and innovations
- Creating an international panel on water, in line with that of the IPCC

Link: <http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/watch/general-assembly-high-level-meeting-on-water/6241754531001/?term=>

PGA High-Level Meeting: Arab State Engagement

12 Arab States provided statements and/or recorded interventions

Main Highlights

- Crucial and pivotal role of water for socio-economic development including poverty alleviation and as an indispensable component to achieve all SDGs
- Water scarcity as a central challenge due to geographical location
- Water related challenges deeply exacerbated by climate change (floods and droughts)
- The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the critical importance of water, since access to safe drinking water, water for hygiene and sanitation are among the first lines of defense
- Overview of efforts initiated by countries through national plans and strategies to face these challenges and achieve SDG 6
- Fervent commitment to achieve SDG6 in continuous coordination with UN agencies
- Critical importance of shared water resources management and ensuring joint cooperation between riparian states, exchange of information and technical expertise, and reaching joint agreements/memoranda
- Despite progress, a lot still needs to be done to accelerate achievement of SDG 6. Call for enhanced cooperation and exchange of experiences to ensure achievement of SDG6
- The Midterm Review Conference should be more than just “a show”; need to strive to operationalize a comprehensive approach to water resources management that includes all related aspects



German Water Dialogues

- The German government initiated an international water dialogue series in 2021 under the theme “**Water Dialogues for Results Bonn 2021: Accelerating cross-sectoral SDG 6 implementation**”
- The aim is to work towards accelerated, cross-sectoral implementation of the water-related goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in collaboration with with other UN member states, representatives of the UN major groups and international organizations.
 - Germany approached ESCWA in mid-March requesting to organize a regional dialogue as a side event on SDG6 during the AFSD (29-31 March), under the auspices of the former Minister of Water and Irrigation of Jordan. Side event cancelled given change in government in Jordan. Stand-alone webinar anticipated in coming months
 - Regional dialogues were convened with UNECE and UNECLAC and regional partners to date
- This dialogue process will culminate on **1 July 2021 in a high-level conference in Bonn**, which will also serve as a preparatory conference for the midterm review of the International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development in 2023.
- A discussion paper has also been prepared by the German Government to inform the discussions, and benefit from the dialogue events, for submission at the July conference.

Upcoming Regional Events

5th Arab Water Forum (Abu Dhabi, 21-23 September 2021)

- Proposed summary brief by the Arab Water Council on the key findings and messages from the Forum (1-3 pages)
- Proposed session on “Accelerating Action on IWRM for Sustainable Development through the Water Action Decade” with key findings and message on IWRM solicited through stakeholder consultation

Cairo Water Week 2021 (Cairo, 24-28 October)

- Proposed summary brief by the Egyptian Ministry of Water Resources on the key findings and messages from the Week (1-3 pages)
- Proposed session on shared water resources with key findings and messages on shared water resources solicited through stakeholder consultation



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Partners are kindly invited to share updates on other planned/proposed activities during the discussions



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2018-2028

Thank You

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<https://www.unescwa.org/Consultation-Comprehensive-Review-Water-Action-Decade>

<http://arabsdggateway.unescwa.org/>

<https://www.sdg6data.org/>