



Draft 10 May 2022

**Global Symposium on
Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions
Itaipu Binacional
Paraguay/Brazil
13-15 June 2022
Draft Concept Note**

Background

Energy, water and sanitation are some of the most cross-cutting and deeply embedded factors affecting the daily lives of people all over the world. These factors are essential to achieve poverty eradication, social wellbeing, economic growth and global prosperity. Important challenges related to water and energy are faced by many countries in their efforts to achieve sustainable development. Also, water and energy are strongly interlinked to environmental issues including climate change, terrestrial and water ecosystems, and biodiversity.

The importance of energy and water is recognized by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which includes the Sustainable Development Goals 6 on water and 7 on energy. SDG 6 calls for ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all and SDG 7 calls for ensuring universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services.

The energy challenge is characterized by its poverty and environmental dimensions. Today 760 million people lack access to electricity and about 2.6 billion people rely on unsustainable biomass for cooking and heating. At the same time, energy-related greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) contribute to climate change, accounting for over 75% of GHG emissions in many economies. The water challenge is characterized by about 2.2 billion people lacking access to safely managed drinking water services, and 4.2 billion people lacking safely managed sanitation services. Without access to safe drinking water and sanitation, people cannot enjoy good health, food security and prosperity. The impacts of climate change are aggravating these challenges. Recent years have seen increasing frequency and intensity of water related natural disasters, causing significant financial loss and casualties.

Ensuring universal access to modern and sustainable energy, water and sanitation services while reducing related environmental impacts lies at the heart of sustainable development. The Division for Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) is conducting a number of initiatives and events designed to support the integrated implementation of SDG 6 and SDG 7. UN DESA and Itaipu Binacional launched in 2018 the *Global Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions Network* to mobilize and scale up multi-stakeholder action towards this goal. Continuing this cooperation, UN DESA is convening the first *Global Symposium on Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions* to be hosted by Itaipu Binacional at its headquarters on 13-15 June 2022.

Objective

The main objective of this global symposium is to enhance capacities of relevant stakeholders including governmental institutions to effectively manage the water-energy nexus and interlinkages with other SDGs covering the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The event will provide a global platform for all stakeholders to disseminate knowledge, exchange experiences and showcase best practices on integrated approaches that support sustainable water and energy solutions. It will also represent an opportunity for dialogue on effective policy, technical and managerial approaches to water and energy supporting sustainable development. It is expected that the discussions and outcomes of this Global Symposium will set the ground for the development of the *First World Report on the Status and Trends on Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions*.

Participants

Participants will include representatives of Member States (developing and developed countries), experts on water, energy, terrestrial ecosystems and climate change, UN organizations and other international organizations, representatives of the private sector and other relevant stakeholders. The event will aim to attract all relevant stakeholders and is expected to be attended by around 250 participants.

Language

Simultaneous interpretation into English, Spanish and Portuguese will be available for the Plenary sessions of this event.

Proposed Organization

The first *Global Symposium on Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions* is being convened by UN DESA in collaboration with other UN organizations and members of the Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions Network, and hosted by Itaipu Binacional at its headquarters. UN DESA will sponsor the participation of a limited number of experts from developing countries. Itaipu Binacional will provide the main venue for the event and relevant logistical support. Also, Itaipu Binacional will organize the field trips expected to take place on the third and fourth days of the event including transportation arrangements and related logistics. Lunches will be the responsibility of each participant.

Timing and Duration

The event will take place on 13-15 June 2022. The event will include nine plenary sessions and a number of side events during the first two days. The third and fourth days will be dedicated to field trips.

Venue

The plenary sessions of the Global Symposium will be held in the *Cinetatro Barrageiro* and the *Itaipu Visitor Reception Center* at Itaipu Binacional Headquarters. Field trips are expected to take place in both Paraguay and Brazil.

Logistics

A separate circular with logistic information for participants will be issued ahead of the event.