



2024 Meeting of the Members of the Global Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions Network

Summary

21 February 2024

1. The 2024 meeting of the members of the [Global Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions Network](#) was held virtually on 21 February 2024. The meeting was convened by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). The objective of the meeting was to discuss the 2023 accomplishments as summarized in the [2023 Annual Report](#), the 2024 – 2027 tentative work plan, members' recommendations and support, including in-kind and financial, and major 2024 events (see Annex I – Agenda). The event included 25 participants representing 20 organizations (see Annex II – List of Participants).
2. **Welcome and Introductions: Mr. Ivan Vera**, Network Secretariat, UN DESA, acting as moderator opened the meeting. **Mr. Minoru Takada**, Team Leader, Sustainable Energy, UN DESA, provided welcoming remarks and indicated that the network is in its 7th year of active global cooperation. He stressed the need for accelerated action to achieve the SDGs, the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. He further emphasized that water and energy are critical factors to achieve sustainable development and that the leadership and actions of the members of this network are necessary to continue moving forward beyond 2030.
3. **2023 Accomplishments: Ms. Nadine Salame**, Network Secretariat, UN DESA presented the 2023 accomplishments and the 2023 Annual Report of the Network. Throughout 2023, the Global Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions Network saw substantial growth, welcoming four new members: Strathmore University from Kenya, IBERDROLA, a multinational electric utility from Spain, the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE), and the State Department of Environment, Infrastructure, and Logistics of Sao Paulo, Brazil. This expansion brought the total membership to 30 organizations from 70+ represented countries, all dedicated to advancing the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). Since its inception in 2018, the Network has been steadfast in its commitment to creating a sustainable future, evidenced by its capacity development activities, impactful advocacy and outreach efforts, and knowledge sharing initiatives. Noteworthy achievements in 2023 include convening the [Capacity Development Workshop on Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions supporting Circular Economies](#) in Madrid, Spain (23-24 February), attended by over 60 participants. Additionally, the Network convened a [side event on Water and Energy for Sustainable Development](#) at the

UN 2023 Water Conference in New York (23 March), where members shared knowledge and experiences on integrated solutions for regional cooperation, climate resilience, and biodiversity. Advocacy and outreach efforts were also robust, with events such as the side event at the 2023 [High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development](#), focusing on integrated water and energy solutions for sustainable cities and human settlements, and the side event at COP28 in Dubai (4 December) on **Advancing Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation through Integrated Innovative Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions**. The Network also conducted its [2023 members' meeting](#) in Madrid, Spain (24 February). The Network's commitment to knowledge management and sharing best practices was evident through continuous updates to its [Global Knowledge Platform](#) with new case studies, events, information and the publication of a special issue on Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions in the Natural Resources Forum (NRF), a UN Sustainable Development Journal. The Special Issue was launched at COP 28 with presentations and [special interviews](#) with Network members who showcased their scholarly articles published in this journal.

4. **2024 – 2027 Tentative Workplan:** Mr. Vera explained that the general objective of this four-year workplan is to continue leading the world effort on promoting sustainable water and energy solutions and to further demonstrate the benefits of an integrated approach to water, energy, and other SDGs. Enhancements to the Network's scope include incorporating interlinkages with SDGs of the environmental dimension, such as climate change (SDG13), and terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity (SDG15), and with other SDGs of the social dimension, including health (SDG3) and food security/sustainable agriculture (SDG2). Key outputs of the four-year workplan include global meetings and world reports, capacity-building initiatives, advocacy and outreach efforts, an enhanced global knowledge platform, and new multi-stakeholder partnerships and voluntary commitments.
 - a. **Major events** in the pipeline include the **Second Global Symposium on Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions** in Madrid, Spain, in June 2024, followed by the **Third Global Symposium**, preferably in Asia or Africa in 2026. Another major event in 2024 is a **workshop** focusing on **sustainable consumption and production** scheduled for October in Antigua, Guatemala.
 - b. **Two world reports** on status and trends are planned for release in 2024 and 2027, addressing various issues such as progress, innovative technological systems, policies and institutional arrangements, data and statistics, etc.
 - c. **Capacity-building workshops** could be organized with support from members at regional levels, targeting topics relevant to specific regions and addressing interlinkages with food security, climate change, biodiversity, and more.
 - d. **Global outreach and advocacy engagements** are planned at major UN annual events such as the UN High-Level Political Forum, the UN General Assembly and the COP meetings on climate change, along with publications in peer-reviewed journals and technical briefs on innovative technological systems.

- e. **A comprehensive global communication strategy** will be implemented to disseminate information effectively during the UN Decade of Action, utilizing advanced audio-visual tools and multilingual communication materials.
 - f. **The Global Knowledge Platform** will be continually updated with new case studies, publications and information on best practices, reinforcing the Network's commitment to supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
5. **Discussion on Workplan and Support from Members: Mr. Vera** mentioned the areas in which members are encouraged to outline their forthcoming contributions to the Network. These contributions encompass **in-kind** and **financial support**.
 - a. **In-kind support** includes active participation in upcoming Network events, such as the 2nd Global Symposium in Madrid and the Global Workshop in Guatemala, as well as hosting and organizing various workshops and seminars. Additionally, members are pivotal to expanding the Network's Global Knowledge Platform and website by providing valuable resources such as case studies, data, models, and research papers. They are also tasked with writing technical briefs on specific topics and developing communication and outreach materials to enhance the Network's visibility and impact.
 - b. **Financial support** from members plays a crucial role in sustaining the Network's activities and initiatives, ensuring its continued success in promoting sustainable water and energy solutions on a global scale.
6. **Comments, Recommendations, and Support from Members:**
 - **Ms. Dipti Vaghela, HPNET** offered valuable insights and recommendations for future endeavors. She expressed the intention to focus on developing case studies examining the impact of small-scale hydropower on women in Latin America, Asia, and Africa, as well as in Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Additionally, she highlighted the importance of shedding light on biomass energy and biomass gasification, emphasizing their interconnectedness with water, food, and energy sectors. While acknowledging that their forte lies in small-scale hydro, Ms. Dipti Vaghela stressed the need to bring attention to these underrepresented areas through collaborative efforts with other partners. She expressed eagerness to contribute these case studies to the Network's Global Knowledge Platform, recognizing its potential to enhance outreach and dissemination efforts.
 - **Mr. Anshuman, TERI, India** offered commendations on the breadth of work and activities presented. He noted areas where TERI could contribute, particularly in wastewater-to-energy initiatives and the nexus between water and energy. Mr. Anshuman highlighted TERI's extensive experience in navigating the complexities of water and energy regulation, program implementation, and water-energy efficiency. He expressed willingness to provide case studies, data, and technical briefs from their research endeavors. Moreover, Mr. Anshuman conveyed TERI's readiness to explore the possibility of hosting sessions and participating in future events, emphasizing their strong network

connections and commitment to collaborative efforts. He expressed eagerness to explore opportunities for contribution in various dimensions of the Network's activities.

- **Mr. Gonzalo Sáenz de Miera, IBERDROLA, Spain** expressed his appreciation for the program and agenda outlined for the upcoming years. He conveyed IBERDROLA's openness to participating as speakers in key events organized by the Network, particularly in Madrid and New York, and during COP sessions. He also indicated interest in organizing joint events, leveraging their membership in various alliances to foster synergies. Mr. Sáenz emphasized their willingness to contribute with a technical brief, focusing on renewables, water, biodiversity, and local communities. Highlighting the current and future substantial investments in renewables, he underscored the importance of harmonizing such endeavors with water management, local communities, and biodiversity conservation. This aligns with the thematic focus of the COP 16 on biodiversity in Cali, Colombia this year. Additionally, Mr. Sáenz expressed IBERDROLA's openness to providing a small financial contribution to support the Network's activities.
- **Mr. Zafar Samadov, IRENA** emphasized IRENA's extensive work in deploying renewable energy and their focus on nexus aspects, including the use of renewables in the agri-food sector, desalination, and other applications. Mr. Samadov mentioned ongoing country assessments, where they explore how renewable energy can support decarbonization across various sectors, including water management. He reiterated IRENA's willingness to participate in events and share its knowledge and products, including digital tools available on its website. These tools, such as renewable energy atlases, can provide valuable insights and resources to support the Network's objectives. Mr. Samadov concluded by expressing IRENA's enthusiasm to collaborate with the Network on these important topics.
- **Mr. Hal Turton, IAEA** expressed appreciation for the presentation of the Network workplan and conveyed interest in contributing to various areas outlined. He mentioned the IAEA's willingness to participate in major events, such as the symposiums and the workshop in Guatemala, and to explore opportunities to support other events at UN meetings, including side events. Additionally, Mr. Turton expressed interest in inviting Network members to contribute to side events organized by the IAEA, for example at COP sessions, highlighting the importance of collaboration and discussion on shared topics. He also proposed the possibility of organizing workshops focusing on capacity building on integrated climate, land, energy, and water nexus assessments, with a specific focus on tools and methodologies used by the IAEA with its Member States. Mr. Turton reiterated the IAEA's commitment to contributing to the Network's Global Knowledge Platform with publications and reports, particularly in terms of analytical tools, methods, and data to support integrated long-term planning for sustainable development.
- **Ms. Lucia de Strasser, UNECE** provided insights into the Water Convention Secretariat's program of work for 2024-2027, aligning with the Network's timeline. She highlighted upcoming thematic meetings, including a task force meeting focusing on river ecosystems,

ecosystems integrity, and climate action, which will coincide with a global workshop on transboundary water ecosystems, conservation, preservation, and restoration. Ms. Strasser emphasized the deep linkages with other UN conventions, particularly on biodiversity. Another event of interest is a workshop on the use of new technologies and innovation for monitoring and assessment of water resources. She noted that work will continue on capacity-building for integrated water and energy policies that are sustainable and responsive to societal and environmental needs. Ms. Strasser acknowledged the strong partnership with UN DESA, the Network, and Itaipu Binacional, particularly in transboundary cooperation, expressing readiness to continue collaboration and participation in symposiums and side events. She also mentioned a UNECE publication on the development of renewable energy, emphasizing the importance of water planning, and shared the following links for further reference:

- [The Water Convention and the Protocol on Water and Health | UNECE](#)
 - [Water-food-energy-ecosystem nexus | UNECE](#)
 - [Towards sustainable renewable energy investment and deployment: Trade-offs and opportunities with water resources and the environment | UNECE](#)
- **Mr. Gustavo Paredes, ASAZGUA, Guatemala** expressed sincere appreciation for the efforts of the UN DESA team and conveyed a strong commitment to continuing collaboration with the Network. He emphasized ASAZGUA's readiness to participate actively and provide assistance as needed. Mr. Paredes mentioned that ASAZGUA is planning its own events this year and expressed a desire to organize some of them in cooperation with the Network. He emphasized the importance of discussing topics such as biodiversity, biomass, and mobility, particularly regarding the use of biofuels in transportation and especially in Latin America. He also expressed interest and emphasized the importance of engaging with members of the European Parliament to align efforts with projects like the Green Deal. Mr. Paredes concluded by expressing enthusiasm for promoting joint initiatives and events with fellow members, highlighting a collective commitment to advancing shared goals.
 - **Ms. Conchita Marcuello, Ministry of the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge, Spain** commended the comprehensive presentation on past activities and on the upcoming work program. She reiterated the Ministry's steadfast support for the Network and expressed hope for active participation in forthcoming events, particularly the symposium in Madrid. Ms. Marcuello shared that the Ministry oversees two networks of water authorities, one in the Ibero-American space and another in the Western Mediterranean, both deemed priorities for Spain's foreign action. She proposed leveraging the Ibero-American authorities network, known as the Conference of Ibero-American Water Directors (CODIA), to disseminate and potentially organize activities. Highlighting their capacity development program in water matters, she emphasized the importance of integrated water resources management over the water-energy nexus conceptualization. Ms. Marcuello suggested organizing activities within CODIA to address conflicting water user issues, emphasizing the significance of water-energy discussions within the Network. She also mentioned a capacity development program in the Western Mediterranean,

focusing on non-conventional resources and renewable energies, offering opportunities for collaboration and knowledge sharing with the Network. While she couldn't confirm participation in a desalination course due to its developmental stage, she stressed the importance of the relationship between non-conventional resources and renewable energies, highlighting its relevance to the Network's interests. Ms. Marcuello shared the following links for further reference:

- [Havana to host conference of Ibero-American water directors](#)
 - [ECLAC invites directors of Ibero-American water agencies to be part of the Water Sustainability Network and Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean](#)
- **Mr. David Peral, Canal Isabel II, Spain** affirmed his readiness to contribute knowledge and experience in all areas related to water and wastewater. He highlighted Canal's commitment to capacity-building with various stakeholders, including companies and authorities, expressing openness to collaboration. Mr. Peral also emphasized the increasing importance of the green economy, noting its relevance amid growing sustainability regulations in Europe. He underscored the significance of connecting sustainability with economic development, not solely in monetary terms but also in terms of social benefits. Mr. Peral anticipated that the green economy would become a prominent topic, emphasizing its role in sustainable development agendas in the future. He mentioned that the green economy will be a special topic in the symposium being organized in Madrid in June this year.
 - **Mr. Patrick Schindler, SEMIL, Sao Paulo, Brazil** expressed a keen interest in co-convening events with the Network and participating as speakers at major UN events. He mentioned SEMIL's willingness to host hybrid side events this year on topics of interest such as biodiversity and water at the COP 16 on biodiversity in Colombia and on biodiversity and biofuels at SEMIL headquarters in Sao Paulo. Additionally, Mr. Schindler offered to contribute to the Global Knowledge Platform by sharing case studies focusing on the intersections of water and biodiversity, energy and biodiversity, and floating solar PV systems.
 - **Mr. Sanoi Boyzoda, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tajikistan** announced that the Government of Tajikistan is organizing the [3rd Dushanbe Water Action Decade Conference](#) (10-13 June 2024). The conference aims to facilitate the implementation of the Water Action Decade, focusing on the commitments made during the 2023 Water Conference. The program of the conference will mirror the themes and interactive dialogues of the 2023 Water Conference to assess the commitments registered into the Water Action Agenda. Additionally, the conference will feature forums focusing on regional aspects, such as Africa, and also on diverse topics such as biodiversity, climate change, and science and technology. Mr. Boyzoda suggested involving members of the Network as speakers and utilizing the outcomes of these programs for the Global Knowledge Platform. Furthermore, the conference offers opportunities to organize side events, including workshops and seminars, with Tajikistan offering to cover local costs and provide

necessary equipment. He expressed readiness to contribute as speakers or panelists in the events mentioned in the presentation and welcomed proposals for collaboration.

7. **Additional Information on Major 2024 Events:** **Mr. Peral** mentioned that Canal de Isabel II will host the **2nd Global Symposium** on Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions: Towards a Green Economy, in Madrid, Spain on 12-14 June. **Mr. Paredes** mentioned that the **Global Workshop** on Sustainable Consumption and Production will be hosted by ASAZGUA in Antigua, Guatemala on 16-17 October. These events serve as significant platforms for collaboration, knowledge sharing, and advancing sustainable practices.
8. **Any Other Business – Comments from Members:**
 - **Ms. Marcuello** shared that the Spanish Government is planning to have a pavilion at the World Water Forum scheduled for next May in Bali. Ms. Marcuello extended a warm invitation to utilize this space for outreach activities related to the Network. Moreover, she offered to organize outreach or joint activities within the pavilion during the Forum.
 - **Mr. Paredes** expressed a desire for increased collaboration among Network members. He mentioned the importance of sharing information and experiences to promote joint activities and projects. Mr. Paredes suggested exploring potential partnerships with organizations and government entities. He highlighted the need for better communication regarding major events, noting that members might not always be aware of such opportunities.
 - **Mr. Anshuman** mentioned an upcoming [Global Science, Technology, and Innovation Conference](#) (G-STIC) scheduled to take place in Delhi, India (22-24 October 2024). Mr. Anshuman invited the Network to explore opportunities for collaborative sessions or events within the conference framework. Additionally, he noted the possibility of organizing a network event in Asia and perhaps in Delhi hosted by [The Energy and Resources Institute](#) (TERI) and offered to facilitate the process if there is interest.
 - **Ms. Lei Xie, International Hydropower Association** mentioned that the International Hydropower Association is organizing three topical sessions at the World Water Forum in May. These sessions will focus on promoting floating solar and sustainable hydropower. She will share more information about the sessions once the date and time are finalized by the conference organizers.
9. **Closing:** **Mr. Vera** expressed gratitude to all the participants on behalf of the Network and UN DESA. He mentioned plans to organize bilateral meetings with members who have proposals for contributions. Additionally, he stated that a summary of the meeting would be circulated for review. He encouraged continued sharing of information and materials to expand the Global Knowledge Platform. In closing, he expressed hope that participants would remain actively involved in the Network and extended sincere thanks for their support.

Annex I – Agenda

2024 Meeting of the Members of the Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions Network

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Introductions**
- 3. 2023 Annual Report**
- 4. 2024 - 2027 Tentative Workplan**
- 5. Discussion on Workplan and Support from Members (In Kind / Financial)**
Members are invited to indicate future contributions to the Network
- 6. Additional information on major 2024 events**
Second Global Symposium, June 2024, Madrid, Spain
Global Workshop, October 2024, Antigua, Guatemala
- 7. Any Other Business (AOB)**
- 8. Closing**

Annex II – List of Participants

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1. Ms. Conchita Marcuello, Ministry of the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge, Spain
2. Mr. Sanoi Boyzoda, Secretariat of the 3rd Dushanbe Water Decade Conference, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tajikistan
3. Mr. Marcelo Alves de Sousa, ITAIPU Brazil
4. Mr. David Peral, Canal Isabel II, Spain
5. Mr. Gustavo Paredes, ASAZGUA, Guatemala
6. Mr. Luis Fernando, UNALA
7. Ms. Ana Lucia Barros Dolabella, ANA, Brazil
8. Mr. Anshuman, TERI, India
9. Ms. Dipti Vaghela, HPNET
10. Mr. Gonzalo Sáenz de Miera, IBERDROLA, Spain
11. Mr. Miguel Muñoz, IBERDROLA, Spain
12. Ms. Lei Xie, International Hydropower Association
13. Ms. Maria Haydee Jimenez, WEC
14. Mr. Patrick Schindler, SEMIL, Sao Paulo, Brazil
15. Mr. Pedro Coutinho Costa, SEMIL, Sao Paulo, Brazil
16. Mr. Samson Tsegaye, Solar Energy Foundation, Ethiopia
17. Mr. Zafar Samadov, IRENA
18. Mr. Hal Turton, IAEA
19. Ms. Lucia de Strasser, UNECE
20. Ms. Marina Gil, ECLAC
21. Mr. Sara Castro De Hallgren, UN Office for Sustainable Development, UNDESA
22. Mr. Minoru Takada, UNDESA
23. Mr. Ivan Vera, Network Secretariat, UNDESA
24. Ms. Nadine Salame, Network Secretariat, UNDESA
25. Mr. Ibrahim Elwieda, Network Secretariat, UNDESA