

# WATER IN THE GREEN ECONOMY IN PRACTICE: TOWARDS RIO+20

3-5 OCTOBER 2011 • ZARAGOZA, SPAIN

**"If our growing population is going to survive on this planet, we need smart designs that maximize resources, minimize waste and serve people and communities"**

*Ban Ki-moon,  
UN Secretary-General*

Building on the results and conclusions of the Official Side Event at the 2nd UNCSD Preparatory Committee (Prepcom 2) "How the Green Economy depends on water", this conference will provide an opportunity to showcase how water is a key factor in the green economy as shown in specific practices in the different regions of the world. The aim is to focus on tools for change, reflect on lessons learnt from practical implementation experiences, and highlight the importance of the specific context. This will support the preparation process for **Rio+20** and contribute to a toolbox or best practice guide for actions which promote water in the green economy.

## Highlighting practice

Water contributes to the green economy. It is important for people and for the planet. The cases presented in the conference will focus on the use of specific 'tools for change' to help move towards a green growth model in the framework of sustainable development and poverty alleviation. They will demonstrate how water supports poverty reduction through investments and appropriate **financing models** for sanitation, drinking water services, and water resources management; how investing and adopting **fiscal policies** for protecting the environment ensures the provision of **ecosystem services** that are necessary for economic development and for a more resilient economy; how to generate change through improvements in **technology**; what types of **labour policies** and reforms are necessary and what job opportunities exist within an economic model with more efficient consumption patterns from households and production practices from economic sectors.

## Expected outcomes

The expected outcomes of the conference include a compendium of best practices in water and the green economy, an on-line database of best practices on water in the green economy, a UN-Water publication on success stories in water and the green economy and a conference report highlighting lessons learnt.

## Participants

The conference is by invitation only. Participants will include stakeholders, representatives of UN-Water, representatives of the UN Global Sustainability Panel, members of UNSGAB, representatives of UNDESA, representatives of the successful initiatives in water and green economy. A group of journalists from Least Developed Countries will be invited to promote the green economy approach in the water sector in their countries. The conference is expected to gather between 60 and 80 participants from around the world.

## Organizers

UN-Water Decade Programme on Advocacy and Communication (UNW-DPAC)

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

International Labour Organization (ILO)

World Bank

United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP)

UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development (UNW-DPC)

Ebro River Basin Authority (CHE)

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA)

United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC)



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## Topics

Topics and conveners of sessions of the conference are:

- Water investments and green jobs: what reforms to gain jobs. **ILO** and stakeholder organizations.
- Green growth and investments in the protection and improvement of biodiversity. **UNEP**.
- Economic instruments in water management: incentives to promote green growth. **OECD**.
- Cost recovery and financing of water and sanitation services and major infrastructures: the role of cost recovery and alternatives for sustainable financing of water services for the poor. **World Bank**.
- Water technologies and their economic impacts: the contribution of water technology to job creation and development of enterprises. **UNW-DPC**.

The importance of the specific context will be highlighted through the examples featured in specific regional sessions, including:

- Water in the green economy initiatives in West Asia. **ESCWA**.
- Water in the green economy initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean: financial reforms and water pricing. **ECLAC**.

A complementary session will provide an opportunity to present and discuss **water planning** as an important instrument in the green growth strategy. It will be an opportunity to discuss experiences in Laos, Peru, the Ebro River Basin (Spain) and Korea. This session will be convened by the **Ebro River Basin Authority (CHE)**.

After a technical visit to the Automatic System for Hydrologic Information of the Ebro River Basin, a dialogue session with **Spanish business representatives** will discuss their role in the transition towards a green growth model.

## Structure

### 3 October 2011

- Morning** Opening  
Debate on cases for thematic session 1
- Afternoon** Debate on cases for thematic sessions 2, 3
- Evening** Market Place: start-up presentation of cases by case owners  
Reception

### 4 October 2011

- Morning** Recap Day 1  
Debates on cases for thematic sessions 4, 5
- Afternoon** Debate on cases for regional session 6  
  
Market Place: presentation of cases by case owners  
Reception

### 5 October 2011

- Morning** Recap Day 2  
Debate on cases for regional session 7  
Cases of water planning and the green economy, session 8  
Wrap-up
- Afternoon** Technical visits  
  
Spanish Business Dialogue, session 9

## Contact

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## Venue

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