



2021 Meeting of the Members Global Network on Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions

Summary 25 March 2021

1. The 2021 meeting of the Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions Network was held virtually on 25 March 2021. The meeting was convened by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). Representatives from 12 organizations participated (See Annex I – Attendance List). The objective of the meeting was to update Network members on the activities undertaken in 2020 and to discuss the upcoming workplan for 2021-2023 (See Annex II - Agenda).
2. **Welcome and Introductions:** The meeting was moderated by Mr. Ivan Vera, UN DESA, who welcomed members to the meeting and invited them to introduce themselves.
3. **2020 Annual Report:** Ms. Nadine Salame, UN DESA, presented the 2020 Annual Report of the Network. The COVID-19 crisis resulted in some of the initially planned activities being postponed. Main activities in 2020 focused on knowledge management, capacity development, and advocacy and outreach. The Network concentrated a large part of its efforts in the development of its Knowledge Platform and Website with the major objective of serving as a global source of key information on sustainable water and energy solutions. A Scoping Paper on “Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions: Addressing Critical Services During the COVID-19 World Crisis and Beyond” was developed which provided recommendations for the scope, priority content and structure of the Knowledge Platform. Under capacity development, a series of webinars were conducted in a number of issues and technological areas related to integrated approaches to water and energy that support sustainable development. The first webinar was at the global level during which the Knowledge Platform was launched and high-level representatives from UN DESA, Itaipu and other member organizations were present. This event was followed by three regional webinars conducted for Africa, Asia and the Latin America and the Caribbean. At the National level, Itaipu and UNDP conducted a series of webinars on the “Connections between Human Development, Agenda 2030 and COVID-19 in a New Reality” for the municipality of the west region of Paraná, Brazil. Under Advocacy and Outreach, the Network hosted a side event in the margins of the High-Level Political Forum on Integrated Water and Energy Solutions. All activities of the Network were shared on the Knowledge Platform and UN DESA social media accounts.
4. **Website and Knowledge Platform:** Ms. Isabelle Marantz, UN DESA, provided a short overview of the Website and Global Knowledge Platform developed to collate and disseminate

information on activities, case studies, and systems using an integrated approach to water and energy challenges. A brief explanation of each area of the website was shared. The Knowledge Platform section of the website was briefly described to the participants. The main eight categories of the Knowledge Platform include: international cooperation; policies and institutional arrangements; asymmetries and gaps; data and statistics; modeling and analytical tools; means of implementation; technological areas and innovative systems; and COVID-19 related issues. UN DESA requested inputs from Members to continue to populate the platform under these various topic areas. The Case Studies page of the Website already includes over 50 case studies from a wide range of regions around the world exemplifying different integrated technological systems that illustrate how synergies can be realized taking into consideration the strong interdependence between water and energy. Members were encouraged to provide any comments and to inform the Secretariat via the website contact form or directly to mckusick@un.org of any upcoming events, case studies, publications, or activities related to water and energy to incorporate into, publicize and highlight on the Website.

5. **2021 Work Plan:** Mr. Vera presented the 2021 Work Plan which included the three main areas: (1) Knowledge Dissemination and Capacity Building; (2) Technical Reports / Publications; and (3) Other Activities. In the area of **Knowledge Dissemination and Capacity Building**, the following activities are planned: a Side Event on “Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions addressing Climate Change” as a preparatory meeting for COP26 at the HLPF in July; other Side Events during important intergovernmental processes including at the High level Dialogue on Energy (HLDE) at the General Assembly in September and the COP26 in November; and a series of webinars to be led by Members of the Network with support from the Secretariat on specific technical areas (e.g., hydropower, bioenergy, desalination, water, waste-water) and on sustainable water and energy solutions supporting other SDGs. Webinars could be organized at local, sub-national, national, regional and global levels and should take place during the April – December time period. Also, UNDESA and Itaipu are planning to develop a virtual capacity development audio-visual package covering sustainable water and energy solutions and their positive impacts on the other SDGs for use worldwide. The first implementation of this package will be in the Latin American region in September or October. It was also mentioned that building and expanding the Global Knowledge Platform with data, case studies, initiatives, modelling tools, etc will be an ongoing process. With respect to **Reports and Publications**, it was shared that UNDESA is finalizing a report on "Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions Addressing Climate Change" expected to be launched at the HLPF in July. It was also proposed that members draft a series of technical/policy briefs on specific technical topics to be launched at side events at COP26 in November. Other reports planned to produce this year include: a report on Accomplishments, Lessons Learned and Challenges from the first phase (2019-2021) of implementation of this project; a report on Way Forward with recommendations on future programmes of action and long-term objectives for 2022-2023 period; and the 2021 Annual Network Report. An **Energy Compact** from the Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions Network was proposed for registration and launching at the 2021 HLDE in September. The HLDE represents the first global gathering on energy under the auspices of the GA in the last 40 years. It was stressed that this is an important opportunity.

The idea behind these Energy Compacts is to aggregate new or ongoing voluntary commitments that ideally have specific impact-level outcomes and could include policies, analytical work, field research, or other activities by Network members working to achieve SDG 7. These efforts could be put together into a single Energy Compact. This presents a major opportunity for the Network to highlight its work and provide a valuable contribution to the United Nations 2030 Agenda and SDGs. Network members will have the opportunity to participate in workshops on energy compacts scheduled to take place in April with experts from the UN. The selected energy compacts will be announced at the Ministerial Thematic Forum in June and the Energy Compact from SWES Network could be launched at the HLDE-GA in September. **Other activities for 2021** mentioned were: a meeting of the Network Steering Committee to take place in July; expanding membership of the Network; mobilizing partnerships; and advocacy activities. A timeline was shared (see Annex III - Timeline) to visually layout the 2021 activities of the Network.

6. **2022 - 2023 Tentative Workplan:** Mr. Vera presented the tentative workplan for 2022-2023 and welcomed members to propose activities to be initiated in the next two years that will help maintain the Network continuity supporting integrated water and energy solutions worldwide. The major event planned in 2022 is the First Global Event on Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions. This event was originally planned for 2021 but postponed due to the COVID-19 crisis since it is believed it would be best done in-person. This could be an opportunity for experts to discuss and exhibit their technological systems and models. Through this event and continued expansion of information for the knowledge platform, the Network can produce the First World Report on “Status and Trends on Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions.” The same activities from previous years are expected to continue, such as side events at intergovernmental processes, capacity building, technical/policy reports, annual reports, partnership mobilization and advocacy activities. If there is great interest, there is an opportunity to conduct a Second Global Event on Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions in 2023.
7. **Support from Members (Financial/ In-Kind):** It was stated that, in order to contribute to its sustainability, the Network would benefit from financial and in-kind support for the next years. Members were encouraged to consider financial and/or in-kind contributions or to support the mobilization of resources for the implementation of the workplan. Ideas for in-kind support were offered, such as hosting and organizing events, development case studies, research papers, policy/technical briefs, expanding the Knowledge Platform, and producing communication and outreach materials. Members were invited to indicate their future contributions to the Network. The members provided the following information:
 - Ms. Isabel Cordon, ASAZGUA, indicated that ASAZGUA will continue its financial support of the Network for the next two years. She announced the completion of the first case study and committed to continue to develop 16 additional case studies to complete a set for the 17 SDGs. ASAZGUA also committed to support webinars on bioenergy, water and wastewater matters.

- Mr. Ariel Scheffer, Itaipu Brazil, explained that both Director Generals of Itaipu Brazil and Paraguay have been changed and the Board is also in a time of transition and that within the coming months there will be more clarity on Itaipu's involvement in the Network. Meanwhile, Itaipu will continue to engage as has been in the past. Itaipu committed to continue to contribute to the knowledge platform and to support technical and policy briefs on statistics and trends for COP26. Itaipu will propose different actions and capacity building activities and mentioned that the platform of the International School on Sustainability could be a useful resource for this effort.
 - Mr. Alex Campbell, International Hydropower Association, offered to participate in developing policy briefs on hydropower related topics and to help host webinars on relevant related topics.
 - Ms. Annukka Lipponen, UNECE, said that UNECE will contribute expertise on transboundary assessment methodologies and other topics for events, briefs/publications, or case studies. UNECE contributed the publication "Towards sustainable renewable energy investment and deployment: Trade-offs and opportunities with water resources and the environment" to the Knowledge Platform and will continue to offer information on such related topics. UN DESA offered to look into the possibility of providing translation to another UN language in order to help disseminate this report more widely in 2021.
 - IRENA will discuss possibility of collaborative framework on hydropower.
 - IIASA and ESCWA offered to provide in-kind support to the Network in the form of relevant reports, events, policy briefs, and helping to expand the Knowledge Platform.
8. **Selection of Additional New Members:** UN DESA emphasized the need to expand the membership of the Network and urged network members to submit proposals for new member organizations, with the objective of at least double the existing number of members by the end of the year. Proposed new members should advance the objectives of the Network and have demonstrated experience in water-energy integrated systems supporting sustainable development. They can be selected from a range of multi-stakeholders such as UN system, other international organizations, governments and government agencies at national and subnational level, private sector companies, civil society organizations, academia, practitioners, etc. Organizations will not be selected if their purpose to join is to establish a commercial relationship or for commercial/private gain. The following possible new members were mentioned at the meeting:
- UNESCO, Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme
 - ECLAC
 - IAEA
 - Itaipu proposed exploring partnerships with different national governments, for example Sao Paulo has a large water company with many interesting activities for water and energy management. The SANEPAR Company from Parana State, Brazil was mentioned as a possible member.
 - ASAZGUA proposed the water company of the Madrid Community (Isabel II) and also recommended considering more subnational governments as members.

- ASAZGUA also proposed SABESP, a water company of São Paulo with Director Mr. Benedito Braga.

9. **Discussion and Recommendations:** The floor was opened up to members for discussion and recommendations on what had been presented. The following was expressed by the members:

- Mr. Furkat Lafizov, representing the Permanent Mission of Tajikistan, shared an opportunity for the Network to participate at the Second International High-Level Conference on the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development” 2018-2028, taking place in Dushanbe in June or August 2022 (more information can be found at: <http://dushanbewaterprocess.org/>). It was proposed that the Network could hold a special/side event on sustainable water and energy solutions.
- Mr. Campbell shared that the World Hydropower Congress which takes place every 2 years, will be held in September 2021 in Costa Rica. He asserted that this could be an opportunity to share the activities of the Network with the wider hydropower community and with the development banks that are expected to attend this event.
- Mr. Scheffer indicated that Itaipu has offered to host the First Global Conference on Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions in Brazil, Paraguay, or Binational area. He informed that the Global Environmental Facility is putting together a Network for energy and biodiversity which could be an interesting group for partnership opportunities. Also, Itaipu is in connection with organizations that may be interested in joining the Network and can potentially offer substantive expertise and financial contributions.
- Mr. Gustavo Paredes, ASAZGUA, also emphasized the importance of finding other organizations who can help with financial contributions.
- Ms. Lipponen announced a meeting of the Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus in 2022 and suggested this could offer an opportunity to share the activities of the Network. UNECE shared the preliminary conclusions from a global stock-taking of nexus solutions and investments of transboundary relevance. Inputs and experiences for the main report, good examples in particular, are still welcome. This report is expected to be published by September 2021.

10. **Any Other Business (AOB):** The following other business was shared:

- Ms. Maria Eugenia Alderete, Itaipu Paraguay, indicated that Itaipu is working on the development of an online course focused on SDG6 and SDG7 interlinkages, and invited members to contribute with videos showing case studies or other examples related to the nexus.
- UN DESA shared a proposal to modify/expand the original Network name given the wide scope, diverse coverage, and growing trend towards a more integrated approach among all the SDGs. Members were invited to submit proposals for consideration. Some options mentioned include: Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions for the SDGs; Energy and Water Network for SDGs; and Water and Energy Solutions Network for the SDGs.

11. **Next Steps:** A list of next steps includes among others:

- Implementation of the 2021 Workplan taking into consideration adjustments and recommendations from members.
 - Planning with leading members the proposed Webinars and Technical/Policy Briefs discussed for implementation this year.
 - Further discussion with those members who have not decided about their specific proposals for finance and in-kind support.
 - Further discussion about voluntary commitments with those members who are interested in the development of an Energy Compact of the Network.
 - The Secretariat to contact and invite potential new members for the Network including those organizations proposed by members and those that have provided valuable support to the Network in the last years.
 - A summary of this meeting will be prepared and circulated to the participants for their review.
12. **Closing:** Mr. Vera closed the meeting by thanking members for their participation and by encouraging members to continue sending information, data and case studies to expand the Knowledge Platform as well as ideas for relevant activities to be implemented. Members were invited to continue to play an active role in the Network in the future.

Annex I – Attendance List

ORGANIZATION	NAME	TITLE/DEPARTMENT
UNDESA	Ivan Vera	Senior Advisor, UNDESA
UNDESA	Nadine Salame	Integrated Policy Analysis Branch, UNDESA
UNDESA	Isabelle Marantz	Sustainable Water & Energy Solutions Network, UNDESA
Itaipu Binacional	Ariel Scheffer da Silva	Manager of Environment
Itaipu Binacional	Ligia Leite	Assistant to the Director
Itaipu Binacional	Maria Eugenia Alderete	International Hydroinformatics Center
Itaipu Binacional	Romeu de Bruns	
Itaipu Binacional	Miguel Benítez	
ASAZGUA	Luis Miguel Paiz	General Manager
ASAZGUA	Isabel Cerdón	International Affairs Manager
ASAZGUA	Marco Antonio Solares	Director, National & International Affairs
ASAZGUA	Luis Fernando Salazar	Asesor Técnico
ASAZGUA	Gustavo Paredes	Advisor of ASAZGUA
Permanent Mission of Tajikistan to UN	Furkat Lafizov	Counsellor
UNECE	Annikka Lipponen	Environmental Affairs Officer
International Hydropower Association	Alex Campbell	Head of Research & Policy
National Water Agency, Gov of Brazil	Ricardo Medeiros de Andrade	Director
IRENA	Dolf Gielen	Director, Innovation & Technology Centre
IIASA	Leena Srivastava	Deputy Director General for Science
UN-Habitat	Vincent Ndoungtio Kitio	Chief, Urban Energy Unit Urban Basic Services Branch
ESCWA	Maya Mansour	Senior Conceptual and Graphic Artist
Ministry of Ecological Transition, Spain	Manuel Menéndez Prieto	Special Advisor

Annex II – Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Introductions
3. 2020 Annual Report
4. Website and Knowledge Platform
5. 2021 Workplan
6. 2022 - 2023 Tentative Workplan
7. Support from Members (Financial/ In-Kind)
 - *Members are invited to indicate their future contributions to the Network*
8. Selection of additional new members
9. Discussion and recommendations
 - *Perspective from members*
10. Any Other Business (AOB)
 - *Perspective from members*
11. Summary of discussion and next steps
12. Closing

Annex III – Timeline

Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions

