
SUSTAINABILITY DECLARATION

Aim and elaboration of the Sustainability Declaration

Update : March 18th, 2018



WHY A SUSTAINABILITY DECLARATION?

Urgent mobilization is in need: we must stress our commitment and capacity to overcome the increasing challenges related to water usage and preservation.

Water-related challenges are rising in the world and require action towards immediate implementation of the water targets outlined in the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Water is a crosscutting element of sustainable development: essential to food, energy, health, cities, education, gender, climate, biodiversity, resilience, oceans, human well-being and to life itself. It is a key part of ecosystem cycles, influencing and influenced by them. Hence, achieving water targets affect all SDGs directly and indirectly. Water is key to assure sustainability and the protection of water as a resource is dependent on overall sustainability.

Time is short until the first review of Goal 6 on water in July 2018 by the high-level political forum of the UN (HLPF). Many indicators show that we are not in track to face the challenges of achieving all the SDGs targets with current policies and that we together must commit ourselves to progress in the implementation of best practices. Moreover, it is not clear if some indicators efficiently contribute or not to the overall sustainability goal. The 8th World Water Forum “sharing waters” is a major opportunity to raise the attention of international community these issues.

Thus a sustainability declaration of the WWF8 will be the synthetic support to express our common capacity to overcome raising difficulties and to show the way to fulfill international and global commitments.

Progresses in water management have not only to be consider as targets *per se* but also as central contribution for a global success for all the 2015 Agenda for Sustainable Development (ASD).

Water is a cross-cutting element of sustainable development, essential to food, energy, health, cities, education, gender, climate, biodiversity, resilience to natural hazards, oceans, human well-being and human rights and to life itself and it is a key part of ecosystems. For example, ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all is a necessary condition for ending poverty and hunger and achieving all the other ambitious goals proposed in the 2015 ASD. Water is key to achieve sustainability and sustainability is needed to ensure the protection of water as a resource. Achieving water targets is essential to the success of all ASD.

The SD will shortly reflect the efforts made to reduce the footprint of the Forum itself.

The SD will express the commitment of the stakeholders involved in water management to contribute to a global sustainability.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION AND THE SUSTAINABILITY DECLARATION? DO THEY SERVE THE SAME PURPOSE?

The World Water Fora, since the first one held in Marrakesh in 1997, have contributed to the water debate at the international level, and have promoted local and coordinated action on sustainable water management worldwide.

Each World Water Forum is joined with a ministerial conference. The **declaration of the ministerial conference** is prepared through a diplomatic process. The Forum is a unique opportunity to ensure that official representatives of countries around the world are fully aware of the concerns and commitments of local authorities, academics, professionals and NGO's. Many other declarations will also be issued during the Forum: call for action from the regional and local authorities, parliamentary declaration, Water governance initiative pledge...

For the first time, the organizers of the 8th World Water Forum have expressed their will to issue a declaration directly reflecting the outcomes of the debates and sessions held during the Forum. It is anticipated that this declaration, called the **SUSTAINABILITY DECLARATION (SD)**, would be built by consensus during the forum and officially adopted at the closing session on Friday March 23rd.

The Ministerial declaration is **politically driven**: it results from high political negotiations, with a specific preparatory process before the forum with contributions from a wide range of stakeholders, reflecting inclusive discussions, debates, capturing different interests and priorities etc. and will be finalized on Tuesday 19th.

The SD **will be stakeholder/participant driven**: the text will be elaborated during the Forum and directly reflect the contributions of all relevant stakeholders, involving representatives from different civil society groups taking part in the Forum. It will be commitment/recommendation/action oriented.

WHAT KIND OF DECLARATION?

The SD needs to be brief (1 page for website and 2-3 pages max. for press release) non-repetitive and with a maximum of 5-6 key messages that will be easily remembered and aimed at making a difference. It should not simply repeat obvious and clichéd messages, but rather use carefully balanced and prudent wording to effectively communicate the key messages. The style of the language should be easy to understand, accessible and meaningful. It cannot reflect in detail all the concerns and contributions made. The choice of phrase should be considered by consensus and reflect the most important points shared by all stakeholders. This will be a challenge and will not succeed without an interactive process.

WHO IS SPEAKING?

The goal is to have the SD endorsed by consensus during the closing ceremony by the community of participants of the Forum. The International Steering Committee (ISC) of the Forum has requested the Sustainability Focus Group (SFG) to drive the process. The WWC and the Brazilian authorities, co-conveners of the Forum working with the ISC, would have the responsibility of issuing and giving visibility to the declaration.

WHICH FOCUS? COORDINATION WITH THE THEMATIC OUTCOMES

Participants will raise many relevant concerns during the Forum and these extensive contributions will be merged into the SD as a complex juxtaposition of thematic competing concerns and priorities.

Nine themes will have closing session with a process of collection of main outcomes and the synthesis of these outcomes will be presented during the closing ceremony.

The SD is not meant to overlap with these outputs, but it will take them into account as well as all process conclusions and above-mentioned declarations.

The zero-draft proposed at the beginning of the forum for discussion is based on three major messages:

- **Commitment:** An urgent mobilization is needed to ensure a sustainable future for the World and participants commit to contributing to common efforts to overcome the increasing challenges of water issues.
- **Need for mobilization and cooperation:** Current water policies will not be sufficient to reach the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The question of sending a strong message to the High Level Political Forum of the United Nations (HLPF) to give in July 2018 a determined push to cooperative alliances,

water reforms and financial innovations and to support other initiatives at international level could be discussed.

- **Water in a holistic approach of Sustainability:** Water as a need to achieve Sustainability. No solution for water issues can be found without progresses for Sustainability in many other sectors. Dedicating a specific SGD to water has been a major step in that way. But efforts remain to be done for developing holistic policies and avoid fragmented approaches.

HOW WILL THE SUSTAINABILITY DECLARATION BE PREPARED?

Preparation of the SD before the forum

A “concept paper - convening messages” issued by the SFG at the 2nd stakeholder meeting of the WWF8 preparatory process has been shared with themes, topics and session organizers. The concept paper is supposed to offer the guiding frame for the SD.

Guiding sustainability questions have been provided to session organizers at the beginning of their work.

Contributions have been collected by the Your Voice platform.

Editing the declaration

The SFG asked Pierre-Alain Roche, member of the SFG, to build a **SUSTAINABILITY DECLARATION EDITING TEAM (SDET)** to draft the successive versions of the SD. The SDET will be dedicated to the preparation of the Declaration, to:

- Gather contribution from all the processes;
- report regularly to the ISC and SFG;
- share with the forum attendees:
 - **at the beginning of the forum** disseminate a first **0-draft version** of the SD as a support for contributions **with guidelines to contribute**;
 - receive comments and edits posted by participants on the on-line form dedicated to the declaration [sustainability declaration](#) or sent to a dedicated MAIL-BOX : SUSDET@gmail.com
 - **on March 21st provide a new draft version** taking into account the feedback from participants and available material from the different processes;
- organize **open sessions** for participants wanting to contribute on March 22nd and gather last feedback from the processes ;
- propose the SD when consensus is reached. (No voting procedure among participants will be used). Unanimity is not required to consider that consensus has been achieved. As the process will be open during all the Forum, all comments by registered participants will be published on the website;
- deliver the final English version of the Declaration on the evening of March 22nd; organizers will provide the Brazilian version under the control of the SDET;
- present the Declaration during the closing ceremony on Friday 23rd.

The SDET comprises 7 members:

- Samuel BARRETO (Brazil, WWF)
- Tatania Dos Santos Silva (Brazil, Youth delegate at the WWC BoG),
- Kanupriya HARISH (JAF, India, alternate member of the WWC BoG),
- Blanca JIMENEZ-CISNEROS (UNESCO, member of the WWC BoG),
- Lucio RENNO (Brazil, president of CODEPLAN),
- Pierre-Alain ROCHE (ASTEE, France - member of the WWC BoG and of the SFG)
- Abdoulaye SENE (Senegal, president of the 9th WWF organising committee)