

UN WORLD WATER DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2020, WATER AND CLIMATE CHANGE ARAB REGION REGIONAL WEBINAR *Solutions in water domain to climate change*

World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought Event

17 June 2020
13:00-14:30 Cairo Time

CONCEPT NOTE

Introduction

The United Nations World Water Development Report (WWDR) is an authoritative review of the world's freshwater resources that focuses on a different strategic water issue each year. The report offers best practices from around the world and in-depth analyses to provide policy and decision-makers with the tools to facilitate informed decision making for sustainable management of our water. The WWDR series also serves as a mechanism for reporting changes in use/management of water resources and progress towards achieving international targets, notably those of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The WWDR is published by UNESCO and coordinated by UNESCO World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP). It is a joint effort of over 70 UN agencies and other entities that make up UN-Water.

Background

The World Water Development Report 2020 "Water and Climate Change" was released on 22 March 2020 on the occasion of the World Water Day with video messages of Director General of UNESCO and the Chair of UN-Water. The Report focuses on the challenges, opportunities and potential responses to climate change through water, in terms of adaptation, mitigation and improved resilience. It also provides an up-to-date knowledge base on the interlinkages between water and climate change, including both scientific assessments and international political frameworks.

Following the online launching of the report, a series of regional webinars are widely sharing the main findings and policy recommendations of the WWDR2020, with specific discussions focusing on the challenges facing each region. The presentations and discussions will aim at addressing the critical linkages between water and climate change in the context of the broader sustainable development agenda. Discussions will also highlight how concerted actions can lead to win-win solutions, paving the way to



enhanced water resources management, attenuation in water-related risks, and improved access to water supply and sanitation services for all in a sustainable manner.

The current COVID-19 pandemic is yet another proof that water supply and sanitation ‘**only for some**’ brings high risks to sustainable development and jeopardizes the well-being of all. The webinars will provide the opportunity to make the case for higher investment in water supply and sanitation service provision under change climate and environmental conditions for sustainable water resources management. We should not forget that while we collectively aim to overcome the COVID-19 outbreak, limited ability to access clean water, sanitation and hygiene are long-time silent killers that cause cholera and diarrhoea, which claims the lives of around 2,000 children every day.

The presentation of the WWDR2020 will thus provide the platform for experts from countries regional partners and stakeholders to contextualize findings and recommendations with regional challenges and opportunities and to share best practices from within the region.

Regional Launching Event in the Arab Region

UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science for the Arab States, in coordination with UNESCO Field Offices¹ in the Arab Region and in partnership with the United Nations Social and Economic Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), will conduct an online webinar to launch the report in the Arab Region. The event will be held on 17 June 2020, which coincides with World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, which are important challenges in the water-scarce Arab region that are being exacerbated by climate change.

The UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science for the Arab States will issue electronic invitations based on invitees lists transmitted by UNESCO Offices in the region and other partners. Invitees will include Arab Climate Change Experts, UNESCO and ESCWA partners, members of Academia and members of UNESCO Water Family in the region. Youth participation is encouraged. All participants will receive an electronic copy of the Arabic language Executive Summary of the WWDR2020 prior to the meeting as well as links to associated technical materials on water and climate change in the region. The webinar will be conducted using Microsoft Teams with the meeting link sent to registered participants before the event.

The webinar will present the outcomes and policy recommendation of the WWDR2020. It will also include a presentation by UN-ESCWA on the key climate change challenges facing the region as identified through the United Nations-League of Arab States Regional Initiative for the Assessment of Climate Change Impacts on Water Resources and Socio-Economic Vulnerability in the Arab Region (RICCAR). The presentations will be followed by a commentary provided by UNICEF and a moderated discussion.

Notes

- *Arabic is the main language of this Webinar, although some interventions will be presented in English. Interpretation will be provided through the Chat function within MS Teams.*
- *Invitees are kindly asked to confirm their participation by registering for the webinar at the following link*

<https://forms.gle/Nqk2WxLqKZzipB8j6>

- *The opening and technical sessions will be recorded. The discussion will not be recorded.*

¹ UNESCO Offices in Beirut, Baghdad, Doha, Khartoum, Rabat, and Ramallah.

Draft programme

Opening Session:

- Opening and welcome: **Dr. Ghaith Fariz**, Director, UNESCO Regional Bureau for Sciences for the Arab States, Cairo
- Keynote Address and Remarks: **Dr. Shamila Nair-Bedouelle**, UNESCO Assistant Director General for Natural Science, Paris
- Welcoming Remarks, **Ms. Roula Majdalani**, Leader, Climate Change and Natural Resources Sustainability Cluster, UN-ESCWA, Beirut
- Welcoming Remarks: **Dr. Mihcela Miletto**, Coordinator a.i, UNESCO World Water Assessment Programme, Perugia

Technical Session

- Climate change impacts on the Arab Region: ESCWA: **Ms. Carol Chouchani Cherfane**, Chief, Water Resources Section and RICCAR Coordinator, Climate Change and Natural Resources Sustainability Cluster, UN-ESCWA, Beirut
- WWDR2020 Highlights and Recommendation: **Dr. Bisher Imam**, Senior Programme Specialist and Regional Hydrologist for the Arab States, UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science for the Arab States, Cairo
- Commentary, **Dr. Omar Al Hattab**, Senior Advisor WASH, Emergencies, UNICEF, New York
- Moderated Discussion