



2023 Regional Water Dialogues for Latin America and the Caribbean: Towards the United Nations Water Conference

February 1 to 3, 2023

Raúl Prebisch Room, ECLAC

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Summary

The 2023 Regional Water Dialogues for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) had the goal of communicating and consolidating the commitments acquired to accelerate the implementation of SDG 6 in the region. In addition, they seek to be a space to exchange experiences and lessons learned for compliance. These took place between February 1 and 3, 2023.

The event was widely attended, including more than 3,700 people registered online and 200 in-person attendees at ECLAC headquarters in Santiago, Chile. It had representation from more than 30 countries in the region. Likewise, space was given for the intervention of almost 80 panelists, highlighting the presence of ministers, vice ministers and a vice president of the region. Here, representatives of non-governmental organizations, development banks, academia, indigenous representatives, afro-descendants, as well as voices of women, youth, boys and girls were also present.

The Dialogues were structured around seven intervention panels, aligned with the themes of the United Nations Water Conference 2023. During the Dialogues, the LAC Network and Observatory for Water Sustainability (*Red y Observatorio por la Sostenibilidad del Agua*, ROSA) was launched, promoted by ECLAC. In addition, a technical conference was held that showed concrete solutions that are being carried out in the region. Here, initiatives in governance, innovative solutions focused on capacity development, data collection and processing, stand out, together with matters of financial innovation.

As a result of this event, a Regional Water Action Agenda was obtained that highlights the main commitments and courses of action that LAC countries must follow to accelerate the implementation of SDG 6. The above, based on a sustainable and inclusive water transition.

Thus, this document presents a summary of the presentations and interventions carried out throughout the 2023 Regional Water Dialogues, together with the key messages of each panel, and the main results.

Introduction

Water is a vital element for achieving the 2030 Agenda. In Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), despite having a supply of water per inhabitant four times greater than the world average, it is distributed heterogeneously, its access is still not universal and an increase in situations of high water stress is projected, centered on the most populated areas and with the greatest economic activity in the region (AQUASTAT, 2016; World Data Lab, 2019). At the same time, there are significant increases in the contamination of all water bodies and coastlines, with the consequent loss and degradation of water-related ecosystems. With the above, it is evident that progress is too slow to achieve the sustainable development objective (SDG) 6, of drinking water and sanitation, for the region, estimating that current investment efforts should be increased by 14 times to accelerate implementation and achieve these goals by 2030¹.

To deal with this scenario, ECLAC carried out open online consultations, aimed at representatives of the public and private sectors, the academic world, NGOs, international organizations and civil society². In them, it is identified that the water priorities of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) are to strengthen governance and institutions, guarantee access to drinking water and sanitation, and incorporate nature-based solutions to provide greater resilience. All of the above requires the development of alliances and cooperation that accelerate the implementation of SDG 6. For this reason, ECLAC promotes spaces for dialogue and exchange within the framework of the Decade of Action for Water 2018-2028 and convenes the countries of the region to share their progress in water matters, in

¹ For more information, review the Forum for Sustainable Development of Latin America and the Caribbean 2022: <https://foroalc2030.cepal.org/2022>

² More information on the Open Consultation for Latin America and the Caribbean at the following link: <https://www.cepal.org/es/eventos/publicacion-informe-proceso-regional-preparatorio-america-latina-caribe-la-revision-half> and of the Open Consultation exclusively for Caribbean countries here: <https://www.cepal.org/es/eventos/se-publican-resultados-la-consulta-abierta-la-cepal-identificar-prioridades-hidricas-countries>

order to share experiences, mobilize cooperation and provide concrete solutions to move towards a sustainable and inclusive water transition.

It is in this context that, since 2021, the Regional Water Dialogues have been held. In its third edition, the "Regional Water Dialogues 2023: Towards the United Nations Water Conference", took place at the Santiago de Chile headquarters, from Wednesday 1 to Friday 3 February. The high-level ministerial event was part of the regional preparatory process for the 2023 United Nations Water Conference³.

With this, the objectives of the event were to communicate and consolidate the national commitments acquired to accelerate the implementation of SDG 6 in Latin America and the Caribbean; share experiences and lessons learned; and to elaborate a Regional Agenda of Action for Water to present at the United Nations Water Conference.

A. United Nations Water Conference

The United Nations Water Conference 2023 will take place in New York, from March 22 to 24, 2023, coinciding with the celebration of World Water Day. It is the first event of its kind since the 1977 United Nations Water Conference held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, 46 years ago. The event aims to assess the progress related to SDG 6 related to water and sanitation, within the framework of the Comprehensive Midterm Review of the activities of the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" (2018-2028).

In addition, other objectives of the Conference include:

- Identify potential challenges and obstacles, as well as opportunities to support the implementation and acceleration of progress of SDG 6,
- Exchange views regarding actions and initiatives needed to accelerate such progress,
- Invite States and other interested parties to announce voluntary commitments, and
- Contribute to the process of monitoring and review of the 2030 Agenda by contributing to the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

The Conference will have six plenary sessions and five interactive dialogues on: Water and health; Water for development; Water for climate, resilience and the environment; Water for cooperation; and one in relation to the Decade of Action on Water. These are supported by the five pillars of the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework: financing, data and information, capacity development, innovation and governance. Both the Conference and its preparatory process have been guided by three principles: inclusive, action-oriented and intersectoral.

B. Structure and content

The event had a hybrid format, face-to-face and online, and was attended by 200 face-to-face participants, representing more than 20 countries in the region, including people from South America, Central America and the Caribbean, and more than 3,700 registered online, representing more than 70 countries throughout the world. It also had the participation of more than 80 panelists of the highest level, highlighting the presence of the Vice President of El Salvador, as well as ministers and vice ministers of Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Trinidad and Tobago. In addition, there was strong representation from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector, international development banks, academia, and civil society, including indigenous groups, primary and secondary school students, women's and youth associations, and rural communities.

³For more information, see the following link: <https://www.cepal.org/es/eventos/publicacion-informe-proceso-regional-preparatorio-america-latina-caribe-la-revision-mitad>

In its first two days, the Regional Water Dialogues were structured around seven thematic panels with the support of the members of the Regional Expert Group⁴, including the OAS, IDB, CODIA, WMO and UNESCO. The latest reports from the Natural Resources Division on water, on circular economy issues and on water and gender gaps. In addition, during the dialogues, the Network and Observatory for the Sustainability of Water (*Red y Observatorio por la Sostenibilidad del Agua*, ROSA) for Latin America and the Caribbean was launched. The five pilot countries: Bolivia, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Panama, expressed their full commitment to this initiative.

Finally, a technical seminar was held, supported by Deltares, GWP and the Kingdom of the Netherlands, to brainstorm solutions towards valuing water and accelerate the achievement of SDG 6. Here, concrete solutions that are being carried out in the region in terms of bridging the gaps of the 2030 Agenda, in terms of water, were presented. Among the solutions presented, governance initiatives stood out, such as local cooperation projects on drinking water and sanitation in a municipality in Chiapas, Mexico; one on floodwater management and water pollution in Costa Rica; with environmental aspects with the initiative Adopt a River of Trinidad and Tobago; and incorporating agricultural materials with a peasant community in Huancavelica, Peru. In addition, innovative solutions focused on capacity development were presented, such as initiatives for education and the empowerment of women in Brazil; considering ancestral practices and indigenous communities in Argentina and Mexico; and a project with schools and their students in Chile. Finally, in matters of financial innovation, the Andean Platform for Water Funds was presented; an innovative financing project for waterworks in El Salvador, as well as a small transnational hydroelectric plant in El Salvador and Honduras, managed locally.

The event participants expressed the need to create more binding mechanisms to accelerate the achievement of SDG 6 in the region. With this, the main result sought from the 2023 Regional Water Dialogues was fulfilled, with the joint development of a Water Action Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean. This document is to be presented at the United Nations Water Conference in March 2023.

Below, the main messages of each panel are reviewed, as well as the details of each of the sustained interventions.

⁴ More information here: <https://www.cepal.org/en/events/eclac-promotes-consolidation-regional-expert-group-water-resources-latin-america-and>

I. High level conference 1 and political commitments

A. Key messages

Throughout the first day, the messages to highlight were the following:

The relevance of **water as a development vector**, in a context of great water and socioeconomic challenges in the region. Here, the urgency of universalizing the Human Right to Water and Sanitation was reiterated, advancing towards ECLAC's proposal for an inclusive and sustainable water transition. The foregoing, promoting a profound change in the approach to the management of all waters, throughout the entire value chain and through the territories, to harmonize its human use, ecosystems and economic activities, seeking the sustainable development, leaving no one behind.

Regarding **water and its relationship with sustainable development**, achievements and innovations that strengthen adequate water governance in the countries of the region were reviewed, to move towards a more sustainable management. However, the countries still face numerous challenges, for which it is necessary to strengthen the institutional system in water matters, as well as the hierarchical rank of the water authorities of the countries, eliminating institutional gaps and facilitating coordination. Likewise, it is necessary to establish collaboration systems between the various authorities, managers and the public. In this regard, the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), integrated sustainable production and consumption models, nature-based solutions and inclusive approaches that embrace gender perspectives, and those of indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples are key.

Regarding **climate issues and resilience to climate change**, it was reviewed that in the region, the greatest occurrence and the greatest impacts are related to water-related disasters. In this context, early warning systems become vitally important, reducing the population's risk of exposure and promoting recovery from the impacts of these disasters. Similarly, investment in IWRM is required as a solution to

better manage these situations and build resilience, especially in the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) of the Caribbean.

On this first day, the launch of the LAC Network and Observatory for Water Sustainability (*Red y Observatorio por la Sostenibilidad del Agua*, ROSA) was also carried out, promoted by ECLAC and the five pilot countries of the project. This network and water observatory responds to the main needs for capacity building for the development of innovative water policies. For this reason, a Regional Water Sustainability Network will be formed for the exchange of good practices, information, data and evidence to promote compliance with SDG 6 in the region, and it will establish an Observatory for Water Sustainability, a digital repository with policy documents and information on activities relevant to the achievement of the same SDG. In addition, it includes the development of technical assistance to collect and use the SDG 6 indicators, according to priority areas and needs. All of the above will be built jointly, and will be enriched to the extent that the countries can contribute, get involved and benefit.

B. Opening and announcement of the Regional Agenda of Action for Water

This section, moderated by the Director of the Natural Resources Division, Mrs. Jeannette Sánchez, had the purpose of inaugurating the 2023 Regional Water Dialogues. Likewise, the instance was used to announce the promotion of the region's commitments towards a Regional Agenda of Action for Water, and its contributions towards the United Nations Water Conference. Below is a brief review of the messages delivered by each of the panel participants (Picture 1).



Picture 1. Opening panel, composed (from left to right) by Mr. Mario Lubetkin of FAO; Mr. Manuel Otero from IICA; Mr. José Manuel Salazar- Xirinachs, Executive Secretary of ECLAC; Ms. Maisa Rojas, Minister of the Environment of Chile; and Mrs. Jeannette Sánchez, Director of the Natural Resources Division, ECLAC, who moderated

1. Intervention Ms. Maisa Rojas, Minister of Environment of Chile

Throughout her presentation, Ms. Rojas mainly highlighted three fundamental aspects for Chile, which can be extended to other countries in the region. These are:

- Establish a policy on water security, which provides clear guidelines for long-term policies with the sectors that are related to water,
- The need to create a National Water Agency,
- Institutionalize water management at the basin level, to guarantee participation, highlight the value of water in planning and contemplating the multiple uses of water.

She commented on the country's progress with the formation of the Inter-Ministerial Water Coordination Committee, made up of various ministries (Ministry of Public Works, Energy, Science, among others) to improve governance, led by Environment.

Likewise, she spoke about the formation of 101 Basin Councils. The purpose of the basin councils is to make decisions in a consensual and participatory manner, whether or not they have water rights. In addition, she highlighted the need to assess the social impact on water, to recognize a community as a shared destiny.

The Minister pointed out that Chile faces multiple challenges just like the rest of LAC. She pointed out that the United Nations Water Conference is an opportunity to care for and relieve water, with a focus on accelerating compliance with the SDGs. The dialogues serve as a space to share topics such as: community management, ecosystem value, social value, cultural value, green infrastructure, food sovereignty, multiple coincidences in which a social collaboration platform that the community recognizes is created.

The Minister announced that on March 22, 2023, at the United Nations Water Conference, they will present commitments for target 6.6, increasing water quality standards, with key open information on ecosystems and water governance.

2. Intervention Prof. Mariana Mazzucato, University College London (UCL) (video)

During the speech, Prof. Mazzucato referred to her recent work on the new water economy and water as a common good, rescuing the relevance of innovation to address water ⁵challenges. In a recent report she presented to ECLAC, she specified how powerful the idea of a challenge- and mission-oriented approach could be for industrial and innovation strategy in the region, in addition to strengthening the civil service.

This approach considers results-oriented procurement, and public-private relations with conditionality at its core, as well as financing with strategic objectives such as carbon neutrality.

According to Prof. Mazzucato, the key is to rethink the design of policies, but also the civil service and the State in the process. It is not possible to have better water policies without a stronger local administration. Likewise, she indicates that it is necessary to internalize the capacities of public administrations, that is, to contemplate new ways of thinking about the governance process itself and the creation of value. This is so that the government does not have the sole function of redistributing value, but also to co-create.

3. Speech by Mr. Manuel Otero, Director General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)

He mentioned that water is an issue that must be re-hierarchized, he supports the initiative to tend towards a sustainable and inclusive water transition for the region. With this, he refers to the ECLAC project to achieve i) the human right to drinking water and sanitation without leaving anyone behind, ii) increasing equal access

⁵The intervention was an extract from an interview carried out with ECLAC, available at the following link: cepal.org/events/entrevista-la-profesora-mariana-mazzucato-marco-regional-dialogos-agua-2023-organizados

and affordability in rates, eradicating water poverty, iii) the elimination of negative externalities (conflicts, pollution and overexploitation) and iv) develop circular economies through the water value chain. He added five statements to his presentation:

1. LAC is a decisive actor for the planet's food and nutrition security, as well as for the planet's environmental security, for the water cycle, ecosystems, among others. This requires caring for natural resources, reducing gaps in production chains, making rational use, under integrated water management.
2. Without water there is no agriculture, without agriculture there is no food security. In the future, conflicts linked to the use of water will increase. He indicated that innovative systems are needed for effective use of the resource.
3. Joint action at the continental level is also urgently needed, which, in addition to promoting efficiency in use, recognizes the great heterogeneity of agriculture in LAC. He emphasized technology to energize water systems, as well as intelligent and innovative systems and models for water distribution that serve different realities.
4. Similarly, the regulatory framework is not just about efficiency. Institutions are compartmentalized and lack resources.
5. Alliances are required for a position, where agriculture is part of the solution to mitigate climate change.

Finally, he promised to develop and implement a work agenda on water with ECLAC.

4. Speech Mr. Mario Lubetkin, Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean of the World Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

He points out that IWRM is a priority for FAO, and urges to manage water resources sustainably, since there are several interconnected sectors, for example, food security is strongly linked to water security.

Sustainable management for sustainable production represents a social value for the population. FAO is helping countries to have a transformation in agriculture and food, so that everyone has sufficient and necessary food resources, while generating less pollution.

There is a need for investment mechanisms for irrigation systems, an interdisciplinary focus and sustainable transformation processes, which include indigenous peoples, women, private sector actors and civil society, among others, in the context of climate change.

Investment strategies must be aimed at managing water resources, protecting the rights of peoples, ensuring social, economic and environmental aspects, and international commitments.

5. Intervention by Mr. José Manuel Salazar- Xirinachs, Executive Secretary of ECLAC

The presentation begins by highlighting that human life depends on the natural cycle of water, its flows in sufficient quantity and quality, as well as the dynamics and ecosystem integrity that feed a large part of the fundamental economic activities for sustainable development.

Throughout his speech, Mr. Salazar- Xirinachs indicated that it is necessary to recognize that water is key and transversal for practically all economic activities, agriculture, industry and mining, and in a very special way for the main sectors identified as promoters and transformers by ECLAC, among which stand out: bioeconomy, renewable energy, biodiversity, circular economy and sustainable tourism. The economy in LAC is intensely based on its natural resources, its environmental patrimony and its environmental services. Water

is used in the production and distribution of goods and services, and in turn, the water returned to freshwater courses and oceans constantly carries a certain pollutant load and temperatures that affect other activities downstream.

He indicated that water is also crucial for tourism, a key activity for economic recovery, especially in much of the Caribbean, Central America and Mexico. On the other hand, he pointed out that in the region, due to low water efficiency, economic growth is not being decoupled from water consumption, unlike what happens in OECD countries.

With this, he indicated that the water challenge is also a governance challenge. Multiple actors with unequal roles coexist, and the water authorities, in most countries, do not reach the ministerial level. Its authorities and managers have multiple attributions throughout the water cycle and across territories, which frequently have overlapping powers between central and local, public, rural and community institutions. Institutional and capacity building for authorities, managers, regulators, and water providers is essential to make progress in resolving the problems of quality, access, water poverty, and water contamination that we are experiencing. Finally, he referred to the fact that it is crucial to promote investments in water services to improve well-being and quality of life, as well as to reactivate the region's economy. This is an area that has a high potential to generate benefits, being a hopeful theme for the region.

To conclude, Mr. Salazar- Xirinachs highlighted the importance of events such as the dialogues. Political spaces for social dialogue and for listening to different voices and communities and committing to concrete courses of action are an essential part of effective democratic governance. Cooperation and dialogue with all the actors in society is essential for consensual decision-making, for targeting investment and for correcting water and sanitation deficits, as well as reducing negative externalities and conflicts around the uses of watercourses. He reminded us to act now, keeping in mind that the cost of inaction far exceeds the cost of action.

C. Global and regional context of water as a vector of development

The objective of this section was to present the challenges that the region faces in terms of water, to move towards the ECLAC proposal for a sustainable and inclusive water transition in Latin America and the Caribbean, along with sharing international perspectives to achieve the Right Human to water and global advances in sustainable water management.

1. Intervention Mr. Henk Ovink, Special Envoy of the Netherlands to the United Nations. International perspective: towards the United Nations Water Conference

Mr. Ovink began his presentation by highlighting that there are only 49 days left for the start of the United Nations Water Conference, and many challenges and gaps still need to be overcome to reach the goal. Activities related to water inspire association and cooperation, here initiatives such as the Water Valuation of the Netherlands stand out. Water related disasters are increasing and for this we need answers.

He indicated that collaboration is key, and for this, people such as those present at the event, and their institutions, are very important. Water-related disasters can never be dealt with alone, they are too complex for governors, investors and the people: get everyone together and listen to everyone's voices; young and old, all sectors, all areas are crucial. He points out that LAC needs to try to figure out what a water agenda would mean for the world, and work together and set ambitions for UN conferences, which are the only way forward. Water is directly connected to ecosystems, agriculture and many other sectors. Therefore, a change is needed in the way water economics and politicians behave.

Mr. Ovink refers to the presentation by Prof. Mazzucato and the Executive Secretary, indicating that the cost of inaction is greater than the cost of action. He indicated that the countries' commitments must be put on the agenda. The region needs commitments to strengthen the partnership and opportunities for change. The Conference is only the beginning of a long road, and a water agenda will help to get us on the right track.

2. Intervention Mr. Pedro Arrojo, Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to Water. The Human Right to Water in Latin America and the Caribbean before the United Nations Water Conference

Mr. Arrojo's presentation began by emphasizing that water becomes vitally important in the context of climate change. He pointed out that in this context, indigenous peoples, community organizations, NGOs, and interreligious platforms should be encouraged to join as defenders of water to participate in the United Nations Water Conference. Make sure they are not criminalized for it.

He indicated that in these matters, it is not a question of creating an alternative forum. Rather, the United Nations Water Conference is a great space for discussion. There, human rights are prioritized over the most powerful. In these types of spaces, not only are defenders of these rights needed, but also government representatives.

In his speech, the special rapporteur asked the LAC governments to open spaces for dialogue with water defenders, alliances with other regions to mark a common commitment. He indicated that the spaces for dialogue and work must also be led by women, who dedicate their time and intelligence to looking for water.

The Social Forum on Water organized by the Human Rights Council and LATINOSAN set a precedent and a path in the fight to highlight the Human Right to Water and open spaces for dialogue with water defenders.

He stressed that the region has social, cultural and political heritage. The indigenous people also have their knowledge of integrated and community management, since community aqueducts are highly relevant.

With all the above, he calls for preserving water sources and promoting democratic governance to ensure accessibility and availability for all.

3. Speech by Ms. Rayén Quiroga, Head of ECLAC's Water and Energy Unit. Advances and challenges in water management: towards the water transition in LAC

Ms. Quiroga's intervention began by providing a brief regional overview on water, going on to identify ten challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean for the achievement of SDG 6. These include: the current deficit in water and sanitation coverage, inequity and regressiveness in access rates, and the deterioration and insufficient network infrastructure, added to the inefficiency in the use of water. Likewise, it includes the situation of water stress in arid zones, with the growing conflict between different uses/users, complex governance and insufficient hierarchy of water authorities, as well as the lack of information for correct decision-making and investment targeting. Adding to them, the impacts of climate change and disasters on water availability and quality, as well as the contamination of surface water courses and bodies and coastal edges, low level of wastewater treatment.

ECLAC proposed advancing towards a sustainable and inclusive water transition. This transition pursues four major goals that at the same time generate substantial economic, social and environmental benefits:

- Universalize access to safely managed drinking water and sanitation, leaving no one behind.
- Ensure greater equity in the affordability of the service, transforming regressive rates into progressive social rates and subsidies for the most vulnerable segments. At the same time, we must work on incentives that ensure responsible water consumption.
- Reduce negative externalities related to pollution and methane emissions from wastewater. This includes reducing the overexploitation of water resources and the growing conflicts over use.
- Transform the current linear management of water into circular management.

With this, the recommendations of the head of ECLAC's water and energy unit were, in terms of governance, to strengthen the water authorities and basin organizations; promote coordination between regulators, user managers and sectors; and generate pacts or national agreements for water between the public sector, communities, and private.

Regarding integrated and sustainable management, the need to optimize management models was indicated, to establish water use priorities by basins or hydrographic regions, to define assignment charges and fines for negative impacts, the establishment of social tariffs, to promote incentives to investment based on principles of circularity, resilience, seeking decoupling between extraction and production of added value, promoting natural water storage, and adjusting the extension of irrigation areas to current and future water availability.

- Finally, Ms. Quiroga proposed to carry out an investment impulse. She indicated that investing 1.3% per year of regional GDP for 10 years achieves universal access to safe water and sanitation. This generates 3.9 million green jobs and household income per year.

D. Water and Sustainable Development Panel

The objective of the panel was to show the achievements in water governance of the countries of the region, to move towards a more sustainable and inclusive management, contemplating the reinforcement of existing institutions, the filling of institutional gaps and the facilitation of coordination between them. The panel was developed in co-organization with OEA and CODIA.

1. Intervention Mr. Mark Lambrides, Director of the Department of Sustainable Development, OAS. Moderation and context

The OAS indicated that they promote water management at the regional level. In his presentation, Mr. Lambrides highlighted that during the last 60 years, the OAS has promoted planning, investment and preservation/conservation of water resources, as well as promoting access to the human right to water.

He emphasized that the water sector continues to face challenges in terms of governance, training and participation.

Finally, and prior to starting the moderation, he indicated that from the OAS, their objective is to carry out actions that allow the achievement of SDG 6.

2. Intervention Mr. Félix Ulloa, Vice President of El Salvador. main speaker

The Vice President of El Salvador pointed out that water is a central issue and is at the epicenter of Sustainable Development and human survival. It is the duty of the State to preserve it and ensure its equitable distribution. Sanitation is also an obligation for it to be a source of life and not disease.

He indicated that they recently presented their voluntary report to the United Nations in New York, where they indicated that they reduced the gap in universal access by 26%. Likewise, in 2022, the Water Resources Law entered into force, and the Salvadoran Water Authority was created, as the governing body that guarantees the management of (water from the atmosphere and liquid state). The Law contemplates in addition to fundamental concepts, such as considering it a human right, its privatization was avoided. They have created a wastewater policy, especially in rivers, because they have tourism.

Other policies mentioned throughout Mr. Ulloa's speech include a national wastewater viewer and a water information system, to promote decision-making and investment movement.

Regarding cooperative cross-border efforts, Dr. Ulloa highlighted that El Salvador is part of the SICA Central American integration model, where the Trifinio region is located, which involves Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador. Here the Trifinio plan has been developed that involves 45 local governments from the 3 countries, where the private sector, academia, and other sectors involved participate. In the case of the Trifinio plan, the Agua Sin Fronteras Project emerged, with a cross-border and transnational approach. This allows economic development of the three countries, taking care of the environment.

Finally, he mentioned multiple development initiatives that are being carried out, financed and supported by different international partners. For example, local projects in harmony with the environment, conservation projects, and programs for better agricultural production technologies using satellite technologies.

3. Intervention Ms. Maisa Rojas, Minister of Environment of Chile

Given the objective of the panel to show achievements in governance for sustainable management and institutional efforts, the minister highlighted that in Chile, they are working on an Inter-ministerial Committee for Just Water Transition. This committee focuses on governance. The foregoing, given that SDG 6 has 6 goals but for the achievement of each of them, the enabling condition is governance, which is one of the greatest challenges in Chile.

She emphasized that Chile has been facing a mega-drought for more than a decade. Despite efforts, it is not being resolved. For this reason, the Committee was created, whose objectives are fair water security. To carry out transformations/transitions towards water security, a regulatory framework and governance at the central level are required.

The project is based on the principles of effectiveness, efficiency and participation.

Regarding effectiveness, the Minister indicated that a national water policy and a national water authority are being developed. With this, it is the first time that there is a framework for sustainable productive development, from the Ministry of Economy, which involves an available budget, to move forward.

Regarding participation and governance, she pointed out that at the basin level, pilots of 16 basin councils are beginning. These basin councils have a public-private structure with the participation of all basin stakeholders, whether or not they own water rights. Here, in addition, work is being done on the formation of Basin Councils, water management organizations that give a voice to those who do not usually participate.

In terms of efficiency, she indicated that she had progress in the regulatory framework. Firstly, through Law 21455 carbon neutral and climate resilient. In addition, in Chile, a prioritization of water has been established for the first time, relieving the right of access for consumption and ecosystems (Law 21435 water

code). The Urban Wetlands Law (important for water security, including water quality – sanitation) involves 100 recognized urban wetlands. The foregoing, linked to the SIMBIO monitoring program at the basin scale. Finally, Chile has recently adhered to the Escazú agreement.

4. Speech Mr. Pavel Isa, Minister of Economy, Planning and Development of the Dominican Republic

Minister Isa referred to the water situation in the Dominican Republic, which is relatively privileged because it has a good water balance, surpassed only by South America. The northeast regions are doing well, compared to the southeast and southwest. In the southern regions however, there is greater demand than supply.

On the other hand, there is degradation and deforestation; overexploitation and degradation; precarious irrigation situation; and enormous household spending, a regressive effect on drinking water and sanitation.

The actions they are working on involve:

1. Pact for water: Water is considered a human right, an economic resource and a natural resource. Commitment of all key stakeholders to capitalization, institutional reform, and modernization for sustainability and equity
2. Water Law: Institutional framework, National Water Authority and definition of criteria for allocation of water resources by use and management
3. Strengthening of inter-institutional coordination and management
4. Accelerate the construction of new water infrastructures
5. Improvement of networks and construction of aqueducts and sanitation systems

5. Speech Mr. Aníbal José Pérez, Vice Minister of Drinking Water and Basic Sanitation of Colombia

Vice Minister Pérez stressed that the water policy is focusing on rural areas, seeking equity. The technical teams are supporting the municipalities, not just evaluating. A unit has been created to accompany the municipalities, which are the ones that operate the drinking water systems.

Community management policy with 3 pillars:

1. Encourage popular economy
2. Support insurance through subsidies
3. Protect the environment

A wastewater and solid waste management program is also being articulated, taking care of Water, Sewerage and Cleaning.

6. Speech Mr. Freddy Mamani, Vice Chancellor, Plurinational State of Bolivia

Throughout his speech, the Vice Chancellor of Bolivia emphasized the country's efforts to promote the Human Right to Water and Sanitation. In this regard, he highlighted his involvement in LATINOSAN, the Social Forum on Water and other international events, which have a look around the next United Nations Water Conference.

He indicated that in Bolivia, sectoral policies for water resources focus on:

1. Efficient, effective and participatory governance for Water
2. Digital management with Knowledge, Science and Technology for Water.
3. Productive, resilient and environmentally sustainable investments with a basin approach.

In these three matters, the Vice Chancellor highlighted the importance and vulnerability of indigenous peoples. Here, it is necessary to recognize and preserve their water conservation and management systems. Likewise, it is necessary to vindicate water as the main Human Right and recognize that water is an essential condition for the life of peoples and life. Finally, it is important to unite with one voice as a region to urge developed countries and multilateral organizations to request funding and support. International cooperation for developing countries must redouble efforts to achieve the water goals.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicated that it is committed to the United Nations Water Conference, for which they propose: 1) appointing a UN Special Envoy for Water whose mission is to activate a permanent monitoring mechanism regarding access to water for integral and sustainable economic development; 2) create an intergovernmental mechanism on water, which promotes management, management, conservation, poverty eradication and sustainable development; 3) approve or update national legislation to guarantee the protection, conservation, equitable and fair access to water for all uses.

7. Intervention Mr. Juan Carlos García, Minister of Public Works of Chile

The minister stressed that the challenge in drinking water is in the rural world. Likewise, he stated that different commitments and concrete actions have been established for each goal of SDG 6 to accelerate their achievement in Chile:

- Regarding drinking water, they highlight the proposal to create 25 Rural Sanitation Services Systems (SSR)
- Investment Plans for Rural Sanitation
- Validate wastewater treatment technologies, nature-based solutions
- Commitment to OPEN DATA and water quality monitoring
- Creation of the Superficial and Groundwater Extraction Monitoring and Control Department.
- Proposal for a National Water Efficiency Plan
- Basin Councils as an essential component of the water management system (2023)

8. Intervention by Ms. Mar Gracia, Permanent Technical Secretariat of CODIA

Ms. Gracia began her speech by indicating that the Permanent Technical Secretariat (STP) of the Conference of Ibero-American Water Directors (CODIA) resides in the General Directorate of Water of the Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge of Spain. They promote the Network of Ibero-American Water Managers created in 2001 at the Forum of Ibero-American Ministers of the Environment. It seeks to raise water to the highest level in institutional forums. Here, joint action plans and programs, cooperation activities in the region and the Ibero-American Water Training Program are promoted.

Fundamentally, she pointed out that the Work Program has 2 lines of action: the Sanitation and Purification Roadmap, which works on sectoral planning on sanitation and on the development of sectoral regulations. The second line of work is the public policy analysis project based on the analysis of the SDG 6 indicators. The studies of indicators 6.5.1 and 6.5.2 have been completed. As regards transboundary waters, CODIA is promoting work on this matter.

She indicated that CODIA structures its activity through the Ibero-American Training Program (PFI), which is carried out in collaboration with multiple partners such as UNESCO's International Hydrological Program (IHP) and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID).). This PFI is

structured into 3 thematic areas: supply and sanitation, water security and extreme events, and Planning and IWRM. In addition, CODIA conducts numerous high-level seminars and technical dialogues on these topics. Finally, the thematic proposals are also specified with the creation of publications as knowledge products that are generated within CODIA.

Regarding multilateral collaboration, Ms. Gracia highlights that she is contributing to the construction of the Ibero-American Environmental Agenda, in collaboration with the Ibero-American Network of Climate Change Offices (RIOCC) and the Conference of Directors of Meteorological and Hydrological Services Ibero-Americans (CIMHET). Likewise, work is being done to prepare the United Nations Water Conference, where the discussions and debates reached in the CODIA meetings will be raised.

Finally, she pointed out that, like Spain, there are some concerns. For example, that the value of regional cooperation to advance the water agenda requires adequate and priority financing. In this regard, the role of governments is essential, along with the development of national roadmaps and the formation of a high-level intergovernmental panel under the auspices of the United Nations.

9. Intervention Ms. Silvia Saravia Matus, ECLAC Economic Affairs Officer

Ms. Saravia Matus exposed four gaps in water and gender:

- In LAC there is a gender gap in access to water and sanitation.
- There is also a gap in the management and collection of water, since it impacts the use of time and job opportunities. In the houses where there is no water, it is the women who carry out the task.
- The third gap is related to access to water for agricultural production. Less than 31% of women own agricultural land, which affects their food security.
- A fourth gap is related to governance and participation, women are not usually consulted in the construction of water infrastructure.

Regarding policies on Water and Gender in LAC, efforts must be made in governance and participation, as well as capacity building to close these gaps.

ECLAC recommends investing with a gender approach, having data disaggregated by gender, strengthening monitoring and evaluation, and fostering capacity building and awareness among men as well.

E. Special Panel: Launch of Network and Observatory for Water Sustainability (*Red y Observatorio por la Sostenibilidad del Agua, ROSA*)

Throughout the Regional Water Dialogues, the official launch of the LAC Network and Observatory for Water Sustainability (ROSA) was carried out, hand in hand with the founding countries. The goal of the panel was to present the main needs for capacity building for the development of evidence-based water policies in the region. Here, Ms. Silvia Saravia Matus, Economic Affairs Officer of the Natural Resources Division of ECLAC acted as moderator. At the end of the panel, various strengthening needs were highlighted, such as the identification of indicators to measure the progress of SDG 6, technical capacities on the links between the water, energy, food and ecosystem sectors, support for the adoption of the circular economy approach in the

water and sanitation sector, in addition to matters of governance and institutional strengthening ⁶. Each of the presentations are detailed below.

1. Speech Mr. Pavel Isa, Minister of Economy, Planning and Development of the Dominican Republic

The minister stressed that it is necessary to build a new institutional architecture with: comprehensiveness, environmental and fiscal sustainability, equity. It is necessary to strengthen the integrated water resources management with hydrological planning of basins and policies for the use of water resources where social and community participation is fundamental.

On irrigation issues, he pointed out that it is necessary to strengthen capacities in modernization of irrigation systems (design, maintenance or operation, water management in agriculture, tariff scheme). The challenge is to see how to adapt the systems to arid and salinized soils.

On issues of drinking water and sanitation, the minister indicated that it is necessary to strengthen capacities in water accounting (micro and macro) (capture), monitoring and generation and analysis of data, commercial and social management of services, protection of drinking water between extreme events, territorial ordering and planning.

2. Speech Mr. Aníbal Pérez, Vice Minister of Drinking Water and Basic Sanitation of Colombia

Mr. Pérez began his presentation by linking the ROSA project to the portfolio project of the Ministry of Housing, City and Territory of Colombia called Habitat. Drinking water and basic sanitation are so important within this secretariat that it is informally referred to as the Ministry of Housing and Water.

In Colombia, progress has been made in the operation of large water and sanitation systems. However, they continue to face challenges in terms of providing drinking water and sanitation services to achieve universal access. A great challenge is how to measure real access to water, how to ensure that the provision of the service continues after public intervention. Here, the government has to focus on the formulation of effective, sustainable, and inclusive policies to meet the goals of SDG 6, but there is a lack of data, such as available flow information, access, and quality, among others.

It is necessary to improve the technical capacities of the participating countries to collect and use the indicators of SDG 6. Generate spaces for dialogue and participation to encourage sustainable and inclusive water management.

3. Speech Mr. Carmelo Valda, Vice Minister of Drinking Water and Basic Sanitation, Plurinational State of Bolivia

The Vice Minister highlighted the need to strengthen institutions to consolidate and increase the monitoring networks of both surface and underground water sources; through a Technical Administrative Unit, which collects and systematizes the information to know the availability of the water resource and allows support to the management of the Potable Water Service Provider Companies (EPSA), in compliance with the development of public policies that respond to national planning.

⁶More details regarding the Launch of the Network and Observatory for Water Sustainability here: <https://www.cepal.org/en/notes/eclac-launches-rosa-project-and-organizes-first-meeting-five-pilot-countries>

The expected results of this project include, among others, better access to hydrological flow data, in coverage, quality and continuity of potable water and sanitation services, in financial matters, in the status of information and reporting systems, as well as information for wastewater treatment.

He highlighted complementary needs to strengthen water management and governance based on the exchange of practical experiences in integrated water resource management (IWRM), and disaster prevention with an inclusive approach. One last need mentioned included promoting the comprehensive and sustainable management of life systems (ecosystems) linked to water, such as glaciers, wetlands and others, in order to generate protection and revitalization policies.

4. Intervention Mr. Leonidas Rodríguez, National Water Council of Panama

Panama highlighted the governance needs, including issues such as creating a single entity on the issue of water at the Authority or Ministry level, and implementing a tariff system that corresponds to the cost of water. In addition, it identified the relevance of strengthening technical capacities in various topics, such as strategies and financial and academic support to improve water quality and training and implementation of information management platforms for decision-making,

In terms of governance, the following needs stand out:

- Institutional improvements and clear definition of roles are required
- Improvements in the management of surface and subsurface resources
- Measurement and tariff systems
- Regulate and standardize information management systems
- Promote a culture of water
- Regulate the use of stabilized sludge and residues from wastewater treatment plants
- Install Mandatory Rainwater Harvesting System (SCALL)

Regarding technical capacities, they highlighted that support is required in quality issues, in rural and indigenous areas in terms of technologies, in operational management and in platforms for information management for decision-making.

5. Intervention Mr. Jorge Castaneda, ASA President of El Salvador

El Salvador highlighted needs for innovation in data management and business intelligence for better analysis and as support in decision-making. Among the highlighted issues, he highlighted the need to improve the:

- Information extraction
- Analysis of data
- Artificial intelligence. As a means to strengthen decision-making and how to communicate information
- Communicate data through maps
- Ensure the participation of women and policies with a gender perspective

F. Panel: Water and Climate

The panel had the objective of presenting the challenges of the Caribbean countries in terms of the risk of suffering impacts of climate change related to water. In addition, it was a space to present the advances for its management: both in improving resilience, as well as in disaster risk reduction, and Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM). It was co-organized with WMO and UNESCO, and moderated by Ms. Diane Quarless, Director of the Caribbean Subregional Headquarters, ECLAC.

1. Statement by Ms. Rayén Quiroga, Head of the ECLAC Water and Energy Unit

In the last 30 years (1990-2022), disasters in LAC have generated an estimated economic loss of more than 327 billion dollars. The economic cost of water-related disasters (meteorological, hydrological and climatological) only in 2022 in the Caribbean represented 7.5% of the entire LAC region. 77% of the economic cost corresponds to disasters related to climate change and water (hydrological, climatological and meteorological). The human impacts and economic losses caused by climate and water-related disasters compromise the ability of the small island states of the Caribbean to advance in economic and sustainable development, mainly affecting housing, tourism, agriculture, artisanal fishing and various services in the region. subregion. Floods, droughts and displacements of humid masses have amplified with global warming and climate change, exposing the populations and ecosystems of the Caribbean to these threats on a more recurring basis. Global warming and disasters also affect the dynamics and integrity of the ecosystems of the countries and territories of the Caribbean, making it difficult to achieve other SDGs. Catastrophic events such as category 5 hurricanes have implied decades of setback due to losses of infrastructure, agriculture, and housing, affecting the livelihoods of the population.

Disaster risk management, emergency preparedness and management, as well as the integrated water resources management are vital to increase resilience and adaptation, as well as reduce the impact and sustain the water cycles necessary for the provision of water and sanitation for all. population and economic activities.

2. Intervention Mr. Matthew Samuda, Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Economic Growth of Jamaica

The minister highlighted some commitments that Jamaica has made to face the challenges of climate change. The National Water Sector Policy and Implementation Plan, 2019 (*National Water Sector Policy and Implementation Plan* (NWSP) outlines measures that are being implemented to manage and protect Jamaica's water resources to ensure universal access to safe drinking water and sanitation by the year 2030. These measures include, but are not limited to:

- Adaptation and Mitigation of Climate Change. Mr. Samuda indicates that in Jamaica, the Government has raised awareness about water and climate change issues, through the work being done by the Climate Change Branch and the Forestry Department.
- Integrated water resources management. Jamaica has adopted an IWRM approach to managing land, watersheds and water resources, through the establishment of the Integrated Water Resources Management Council (*Integrated Toilett Resources Management Council*, IWRMC).
- Improvements to the water supply infrastructure. The country's main utility provider, the National Water Commission (the *National Toilett Commission*, NWC), is carrying out several critical infrastructure projects that, when completed, will improve water supply services and increase the country's resilience to climate change.
- Rainwater Collection. The Jamaican government recognizes the importance of rainwater harvesting in providing household drinking water. Consequently, a Guide for Rainwater Harvesting is being developed.

In closing, Mr. Samuda emphasized that Jamaica is committed to working closely with its key stakeholders to ensure that its water resources are effectively managed to provide social, economic and environmental well-being for our nation, now and in the future.

3. Intervention Mr. Konris Maynard, Minister of Infrastructure and Public Services of Saint Kitts and Nevis

In relation to Mr. Maynard's intervention, he began by presenting a context of high challenges in terms of water. He indicates that the country faces a situation in which annual rainfall has decreased by 20% in recent years. He points out that, given the abrupt change, citizens and industry have not gotten used to this new scenario, so first, a change in the mentality of the real availability of water is required to make more efficient use of it.

Seawater has been considered the next step, but not yet the solution to fill this gap. The foregoing, given the high interdependence between the water and energy sectors, in this case, in the high energy demand required to desalinate seawater. In this case, the Minister indicates that 100% renewable energy is needed to allow these projects to be financially sound and have investment plans.

As a third aspect, the Minister mentions that the government needs to invest in water distribution systems throughout the country. So far, they are taking advantage of 60% of underground water resources, estimated that there are still 40% of virgin freshwater reserves in this type of natural storage.

Finally, he indicated the need to develop grant and loan schemes to meet the basic needs of the country in a changing environment to increase resilience.

II. High Level Conference 2 and agreements

A. key messages

Among the main messages that emerged throughout the 2023 Regional Water Dialogues, on their second high-level day, the following emerged.

Financial resources are required, especially in countries with greater infrastructure and coverage deficits. For this, it is essential to identify and mobilize the sources of financing and appropriate financial instruments such as loans, bonds or other blended financing instruments. At the same time, it is necessary to make the most of available and incoming financial opportunities, such as adaptation and mitigation finance and nature-based solutions. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) also stand out as mechanisms for accessing finance, since the experience of the private sector can be harnessed.

In the same way, **regional and territorial cooperation** is essential when talking about a resource that does not recognize borders. Strengthening regional and territorial water cooperation so that it is inclusive, intersectoral and action-oriented is a fundamental task. Show your benefits at multiple scales and across sectors. This session made evident the efforts that various countries in the region are making in this regard, but also the challenges that remain to be faced. Collaboration is not just a useful option, but a necessary condition for achieving the SDG targets. With this, governments must promote a culture of collaboration and systems that facilitate this link between sectors.

The extraction, use, treatment and return of water to **ecosystems** are inevitably related to **renewability and energy security, food security and environmental sustainability**. It was shown that it is crucial to capitalize on the synergies and interrelations involved in decision-making, planning and water management, which in turn enhances the advancement of other sustainable development goals contained in the 2030 Agenda.

From the **space for open exchange**, the relevance of incorporating aspects of education and ancestral knowledge into the Regional Agenda for Action for Water arose; the opportunity to take advantage

of innovative models of management, conflict resolution and hydro-politics; the relevance of accepting and providing sustainability to international treaties and transboundary water agreements; consider coordinated management and development of water, land and related resources; to motivate the participation of women, youth, representatives of territories and generally marginalized groups, in this discussion.

B. Water, Financing and Health Panel

The panel on Water, Financing and Health began the second high-level session, and its objective was to explore investment mechanisms that allow the drinking water and sanitation sector to access new sources of financing. As a second objective, it was intended to show examples of the benefits of investing in the circular economy for the sector. It had financial and technical support from ECLAC initiatives with GIZ, UNPDF and IDB. At the same time, it was moderated by Francisco Canal, Vice Minister of Environmental Planning of the Territory of Colombia, who outlined the regional context, mentioning the relevance of water due to its interconnection with various sectors.

1. Intervention by Ms. Marina Gil from ECLAC. Circular Economy and investment needs

Ms. Gil emphasized that in the region there are problems of inequity and inequality, environmental externalities (less than 50% of wastewater is safely treated) and economic barriers such as the high cost of infrastructure maintenance, energy costs, zero incentives for investment in rural areas and marginal urban areas, among other related challenges.

The need for investment to universalize drinking water and sanitation is reflected in an ECLAC study that concludes that it is necessary to invest 1.3% of GDP per year for 10 years to achieve safe coverage and infrastructure maintenance ⁷. This would also increase employment, improve the gender gap, improve the environment, public health, etc.

It is also necessary to invest in circular water and sanitation systems, contributing to the circular economy. Investing in these systems has a cost-benefit ratio of USD 1.34 per equivalent person. With a circular approach, methane recovery makes it possible to produce electricity, reducing CO₂, generating new green jobs and income/savings.

2. Intervention Ms. Sunny Guidotti, UNICEF Regional Specialist in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Ms. Guidotti's intervention was based on five points that she highlighted:

1. Large social gaps in LAC
 - Rural areas lag far behind urban areas
 - The same happens between the richest and the poorest.
2. Need to coordinate the closure of coverage with education and health initiatives
3. Lack of financing plans not only for homes, but also educational and health centers. In the above, he highlighted that there are opportunities to:
 - increase efficiency
 - Improve use of subsidies
 - Address data breaches

⁷More details in the publication Fernández et al. (2021) Regulatory and tariff policies in the drinking water and sanitation sector in Latin America and the Caribbean, at <https://repositorio.cepal.org/handle/11362/47131>

At the same time, there are opportunities to mobilize funds towards increased investment at the household level, considering equity principles and reviewing fee systems, loans and incentives as well as seeking better use of existing sources. It is also possible to mobilize financing towards the increase in government allocation (taxes) hand in hand with greater transparency and accountability.

3. Intervention Ms. Mariana Navarro, CONAGUA of Mexico

Ms. Navarro began her speech by commenting on the challenge of structured investment programs in water and sanitation considering the characteristics of each country's institutional framework. The foregoing, considering the perspective of equity and social justice

In Mexico, there are different types of federal financing in the form of direct investment in hydraulic infrastructure, drinking water subsidies, as well as refund of rights and sanitation. This financing is managed by the federal agencies PROAGUA, PRODDER, PROSANEAR.

With this, she stressed that the main challenge from public administrations is the awareness of civil servants. Other challenges also include:

- Drinking water and sanitation infrastructures are deteriorated due to lack of maintenance
- The programming of resources does not contemplate the focus of compliance with the Human Right to Water and Sanitation
- Another challenge is the work from the community organization.

With this, she closed the presentation by indicating that it is necessary to be empathetic as officials; work from equity and social justice; based on actual information and analysis; and educate the population.

4. Intervention Mr. Rafael Reyes, IDAAN of Panama

Mr. Reyes presented regarding the project "contracting under the turnkey modality" to stimulate investments through private participation in Panama. The turnkey modality is protected by a law of the Ministry of Economy. This financing law does not demand an immediate availability of resources from the government (given the post-pandemic situation): the work is financed by the contractors. This modality allows to know exactly the costs of the work. It also improves delivery times as contractors seek to keep the return period to a minimum. For payments, you set milestones or products and pay against them.

After presenting the financing modality, the intervention reported some key projects carried out in the country. These include the establishment of new drinking water supply systems, as well as sewerage systems and streets.

5. Intervention of Mr. José Carlos Revelo, ANDA of El Salvador

Throughout his intervention, Mr. Revelo presented about the technical solutions that are being carried out in El Salvador to improve the distribution of water. This mainly includes solutions to reduce losses, alternatives to reduce contaminants and improve water quality. He highlighted the challenge of finding good quality water sources that meet the necessary requirements.

He also explored viable alternatives to improve wastewater treatment with a circular economy vision. With these types of projects, it is sought to obtain greater energy efficiency and customer service (citizen participation: legalized users). They promote a gender approach in decision-making positions and human rights.

Regarding sanitation matters, in El Salvador, it is the area that requires the most investment. Here, the focus is put on creating new treatment plants and incorporating the circular economy approach. This has been done by promoting models of financial transparency, to encourage investment. Alliances have been established and projects are being developed with: IDB, WB, USA, China, Sweden and the Basque Country

Mr. Revelo closes by indicating that, for them, the gaps in access to drinking water and sanitation have been an opportunity to develop circular models. He urged to "see the glass half full" and to consider the challenges of the 2030 Agenda as an opportunity.

6. Speech Mr. Didac Borrás, Aguas Andinas de Chile

Mr. Borrás pointed out that in order to face the challenges of climate change, investments are required to become a resilient economy. These investments should not only come from the private sector, but should be a collaborative public-private response.

From Aguas Andinas, they are promoting circular economy systems, through the return of purified water to the river, and technologies to improve energy efficiency. The biofactories, their wastewater treatment plants are an example of a circular economy. There, green energy is generated and delivered to the electrical system. Also, these biofactories have fertilizer production from sludge.

To become resilient against alluvium, some mega-ponds are being built in Pirque, at the beginning of the river, to capture alluvial water and reduce turbidity downstream in the river, without having to cut off the water supply for the inhabitants. during periods of flooding. Other projects include investing in additional sources of water resources, as well as remodeling and automating current facilities.

Finally, Mr. Borrás indicated that they are taking advantage of the financial market to offer sustainability bonds. The financial market has been increasingly valuing environmental, social and governance strategies. In this way, in 2018 they began launching the "Green & Social Bond BAGUA-AC" until 2025. Due to the success, in 2019 they launched a second amortized until 2044, and in 2022 a third, each time with better rates. They have used the profits granted by these bonds, in the new projects mentioned. Investment continues to grow exponentially, along with foreign investment. In this way, the bond system promoted by Aguas Andinas has been a financing success and has been launched on the international market.

Finally, as benefits of promoting this type of bonuses, it is possible to mention:

- Bond financial returns are comparable with the addition of positive environmental and/or social effects,
- Satisfy investment requirements in environmental, social and governance matters,
- Contribute to efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change,
- Greater transparency and accountability on the use and management of resources,
- The environmental, social and governance bond credentials have increased the company's visibility, driving new partners and stakeholders interested in investing.

7. Intervention Mr. Henry Moreno, Principal Specialist of the Water and Sanitation Division, IDB

Mr. Moreno presented several innovative financing mechanisms for the water and sanitation sector, among which he highlighted the following:

- Green bonds and social bonds, sustainable bonds. Sustainable, social and environmental projects. Resilience bonds (based on the approach of reducing greenhouse gases (GHG) in the sector.
- Results-Based Financing. Multilateral organizations and cooperating countries advance towards the granting of loans or technical cooperation. Many companies are working on contracting for results, they are paid for the improvement in the quality of service or other established indicators.
- Water resources in the region. Basin level where users make contributions to improve quality and availability, allow taking advantage of nature-based solutions in the improvement and maintenance of basins
Caribbean Toilet Utility Insurance Company (CWUIC) insurance company for drinking water companies in the Caribbean. Developed to deal with meteorological disasters (hurricanes and storms). It is insurance and financing for recovery of this type of event. The amount to be financed depends on the impact of the disaster.

8. Intervention Mr. Franz Rojas, Director of water and sanitation analysis, CAF

Mr. Rojas highlighted that in LAC, the current investment must triple (or quadruple) in order to close the access gaps. In terms of costs (CAPEX), he indicated that 25 billion dollars a year is required; while to operate and maintain these systems (OPEX), 26 billion dollars a year are required. This would generate a total annual investment per capita of 79 dollars, which is necessary to close gaps in the region. In addition, greater transparency and efficiency in the use of financial resources is needed.

Some financial mechanisms that have been applied by CAF include blended finance (in Spanish, compound financial structures), nature-based instruments (green bonds, water funds) and results-based financing models.

The main messages are:

- Embrace green and innovative approaches: circular economy, Nature-based solutions, blended finance structures.
- Not only increase resources but improve transparency. This helps in providing efficiency and improves accountability as well.
- Innovation, on the financial, social, environmental side. It is necessary to take advantage of the potential of global investment trends and new instruments.
- Strengthen alliances. For example, the *Water Finance Coalition* (coalition for water financing) integrates more than 60 national and international public development banks, to promote alliances and greater knowledge on the matter.

9. Intervention Mr. Héctor Serrano, Principal Specialist in water supply and sanitation, World Bank

Mr. Serrano began his speech by mentioning some challenges in the sector, indicating that only a few institutions establish rates for massive water consumption or pollution control. In potable water and sanitation, the combination of income from tariffs and government transfers continues to be the predominant financing scheme.

To achieve the desired level of financing, it is necessary to promote greater private participation, and improve the efficiency in the expenditure of existing public funds necessary to achieve the level of financing and its benefits. In addition, a change in the incentive structures is required, with results-based approaches. Finally, greater preparation is required for extreme events.

Mr. Serrano indicated that this can be achieved through:

- Results-based programs. Projects are funded as they achieve specific development milestones,
- Projects focused on closing gaps in access to drinking water and sanitation
- Participatory governance, considering the involvement of women and children in said programs,
- System improvements, with key personnel in specific units, trained in environmental and social systems, and in management matters.

C. Panel: Water and regional and territorial cooperation

The panel was held with the objective of calling for action on the need to strengthen regional and territorial water cooperation so that it is inclusive, intersectoral and action-oriented. At the same time, it was intended to show its benefits at multiple scales and across different sectors. It was developed in collaboration with the OAS and the IDB.

Mr. Sergio Campos, Head of the Water and Sanitation Division, IDB was in charge of moderating the session. In his moderation, he provided a regional context on climate change, indicating the relevance of a digital and operational transformation that is also participatory and social. He also pointed out that LAC will be able to export water footprint if they have an integrated water-energy-agriculture management. At the same time, he took the opportunity to highlight the region's challenges in terms of innovation: green infrastructure, governance: management models at the basin level, territorial approach, local solutions - global challenges need local solutions, and he took the opportunity to call on action for rural systems, so that they are more resilient, healthy and productive.

1. Speech Mr. Erwin Freddy Mamani, Vice Chancellor of the Plurinational State of Bolivia

Vice Foreign Minister Mamani began his presentation by talking about cross-border cooperation; contextualizing water as a catalyst for integration and peace among peoples. At the same time, he highlighted it as an element of articulation, cooperation, without ceasing to respect Mother Earth. This was mentioned in the Global Consensus on Transboundary Basins.

Relevant events are the first meeting of organizations of the La Plata basin, and the II Symposium on Transboundary Waters in Latin America and the Caribbean. The latter resulted in agreements on:

1. Strengthening of basin organizations/mechanisms
2. Inclusive water governance (gender and indigenous peoples)
3. Deepening of knowledge of basins and aquifers
4. Comprehensive management of ecosystems linked to transboundary basins
5. Increased capacity development in IWRM
6. Orientation to action to move from planning to intervention
7. Vision of cooperation and better financing models
8. Progress towards a regional alliance and agenda in LAC

He ended by recognizing that the rights to water are not only for people, but for all living beings.

2. Speech Mr. Francisco Canal, Vice Minister of Territorial Environmental Planning, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia

The Vice Minister indicated the need to order the territory around the water. In Colombia they have the National Policy for the Comprehensive Management of Water Resources that includes multiple programs. The National Development Plan aimed at achieving resilience in the face of climate change is one of them. Among one of its pillars, transformations, the objective of territorial planning around water and environmental justice stands out.

Of the outstanding programs of the Ministry of the Environment, there are the Territorial Programs for Ordering and Governance around water.

He indicated that the emphasis should be placed on water regions: Space that links territorial entities, environmental authorities and other actors, under criteria of homogeneity, complementarity, functional relationships, cooperation, equity and compensation, favoring the generation of joint actions that transcend jurisdictional limits. and that generate processes of regional sustainability.

Likewise, he indicated that the ordering of the territory should be around water and environmental justice. This leads to water governance systems. Presented an implementation path in progress.

3. Intervention Mr. Raúl Artiga, Coordinator of the Climate Change and Risk Unit, Central American Commission for Environment and Development of SICA

Mr. Artiga presented the water agenda being carried out by the Central American Commission for Environment and Development (CCAD) of the Central American integration system (SICA). Here, he focused on the Regional Environmental Framework Strategy (ERAM) that they are carrying out. It is consolidated as a new international and regional political framework, which establishes goals that will have to be considered at the regional and national level as a reference in the actions that are promoted in terms of water management. This has a specific strategic line focused on the Comprehensive Management of Water Resources. This strategic line aims to strengthen the sustainable management of water resources that ensure availability for all uses, through the promotion of knowledge management and governance. At the same time, this strategic line promotes coordination of all the actors involved in water matters in the region.

The four expected results of this line are:

1. Have improved capacities of officials from CCAD countries in the design and implementation of a regional Knowledge Management platform for the sustainable use of water and its governance
2. To have promoted the protection and restoration of priority water ecosystems by implementing technology, a new water culture and economic instruments to value water.
3. To have consolidated a regional system of information, evaluation and management of environmental and climatic risks related to water resources
4. To have established and is operating a regional framework for the management of international watercourses, basins and transboundary aquifers

Likewise, Mr. Artiga mentioned the relevance of understanding that cooperation goes through a political dialogue, in which commitments are required. Here, he highlighted the advantages of having integration systems, such as SICA, that promote South-South cooperation.

Finally, he indicated the importance of building solutions through political dialogue and technical cooperation, supporting local efforts that support those at regional levels.

4. Intervention Ms. Alexandra Moreira, Secretary General, Organization of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty

Ms. Moreira indicated that the Amazon basin represents 20% of the fresh water supply in the world, and 70% of the LAC. The Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization is made up of 8 countries working harmoniously. One of the axes involves IWRM in the Amazon basin.

Each country alone fails to meet SDG 6, a regional vision is necessary. A vision Strategic Plan for the Amazon Basin has:

- 19 national interventions - early warning, nature-based solutions, alternatives for water supply
- Amazon Regional Observatory
- Monitoring, altimetry required
- Nexus platform (own modeling, forecasts, predictive scenarios)
- Regional Plan for Drinking Water, Basic Sanitation and Solid Waste Management

There are two projects that stood out in this matter:

- Sustainable Management of the Amazon Aquifer System. Here they carry out cross-border analyzes of water availability, to support decision-making, and the information available to the different cross-border service providers.
- Improving Water Security to increase Climate Resilience

5. Speech Mr. Jorge Pedraza, Secretary General of the Andean Community

The Secretary General of the Andean Community, presented the Andean Environmental Charter since 2020. This is constituted with the fundamental principle of fighting against the effects and mitigating the advance of climate change. In addition, it is made up of six thematic axes:

1. Comprehensive management of water resources,
2. Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity,
3. Disaster prevention and care, including comprehensive fire and forest fire management,
4. Strengthening the environmentally sound management of chemical substances and waste throughout their life cycle,
5. Fight against illegal mining and its related crimes, and
6. Promotion of circular economy.

He also mentioned two other relevant spaces:

- Andean Environmental Platform, real-time information with satellite support to preserve and care for water resources.
- The Andean Regional Water Forum ⁸(GIRH experiences exchange) to see that SDG 6 is on track to be met.

Mr. Pedraza emphasized that if cooperation is not carried out, if you do not work together, if interculturality is not used, the goals of the development objectives will not be met. In closing, he summoned everyone, under the leadership of ECLAC, so that this is a message that we take to the United Nations Water Conference, urging them to move from speeches to actions.

⁸ More information in the following note: <https://www.cepal.org/es/eventos/cepal-participa-foro-regional-andino-agua-2022-avanzar-la-implementacion-la-carta-ambiental>

6. Intervention Ms. Lorena Larios, Secretary of Cooperation of the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB)

Ms. Larios began her presentation by reporting that the comprehensive management of water resources in Ibero-American Cooperation requires solidarity and dialogue.

At the moment, they indicate that they are working on a sanitation and purification roadmap. The foregoing, considering the experience of the General Secretariat and of all its countries, which has a trajectory of more than two decades.

She also indicated that she was working on promoting comprehensive management. This, through courses on basin organizations, solutions based on nature and groundwater.

The SEGIB highlights the importance of the Conference of Ibero-American Water Directors (CODIA) as a cooperation experience. From here, for example, Ministers of the Environment from 22 countries agreed to position Ibero-America at the center of high-level political discussions of an international nature.

She pointed out that the risks associated with climate change make it an issue where the countries of the region, through their senior managers, must influence. To do this, the SEGIB has two fundamental elements:

- They have developed a four-year action plan, and
- Being a meeting platform.

7. Intervention by Ms. Liseth Hernández, Executive Secretary of the Trifinio Plan Treaty

Ms. Hernández ratified water as an integrating element. In addition, she focused on sharing the regulatory framework of the Trinational Water Agenda, which contemplates:

- Governance and citizen participation
- Coverage and access to water and sanitation
- HRM knowledge management
- Promote the use of HR
- Economic, social, environmental, cultural valuation
- Management of RRNN for protection and recovery

She highlighted that from the cooperation experiences it is possible to obtain lessons and challenges. For example, being a migrant smuggling corridor.

Mention the following commitments:

- Commitment to apply in the territory, recognizing allies
- Governance Capacities
- Impact measurement

Ms. Hernández ends her presentation by indicating that a fundamental point for the sustainability of these commitments is that the social, economic and environmental opportunities of cooperation must be highlighted and analyzed.

8. Intervention Mr. Eduardo Ortiz, Advisor, Pan American Health Organization

Mr. Ortiz's intervention began by pointing out the regional context of conflicts and water, in the sense that this occurs due to the different uses between users of the resource and by non-user actors. It is here that institutional and regulatory frameworks become relevant. He also pointed out the difficulties in measuring conflicts. In this matter, the different issues that should be focused on in the region, in water matters are:

- Financing
- Cooperation
- Regional water agenda
- Andean Community, Environmental Charter with a lot of structure in the modernization for monitoring
- Colombia and the territorial ordering of water
- Bolivia and the Global Consensus for Transboundary Basins
- Governance: social justice, working on model change, IWRM with climate change, local decision-making, sources of financing for aquifers
- Management instruments: vulnerability, basic access, ecosystem criteria, hydric regions, work
- Investment
- Water observatories and biodiversity

He urges to increase technical capacities, increase knowledge of ecosystems, work in mining. It is aligned with ECLAC's request to bring the commitments and advances that are being related, in addition to having the support of CODIA for 2 decades.

D. Panel: Water, Energy and Food

The panel had the objective of showing progress and policies in the region that contemplate the synergies and interrelationships of the water, energy, food and environment sectors, in decision-making and planning, in terms of the potential they offer for the achievement of the sustainable development commitments of the 2030 Agenda. It was developed in coordination with FAO, so Mr. Mario Lubetkin, FAO regional representative for Latin America and the Caribbean, was in charge of providing moderation and providing context. He highlighted the relevance for FAO of permanently working and cooperating in areas as strategic as the link between water and food. For context sake, he indicated that most of the damage and losses due to drought is absorbed by agriculture in low and middle-income countries; where 35% of food losses occur in the region, and where agri-food systems use up to 70% of fresh water. FAO is carrying out a transformation of agri-food systems to make them more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable. Likewise, progress is being made with international agreements, such as the United Nations Food Systems Summit. Also, the advances that are being carried out by the different countries and organizations in the matter are reviewed, considering the interrelationships of water, energy, food and ecosystems.

1. Intervention Mr. Esteban Valenzuela, Minister of Agriculture of Chile

He referred to the fact that they are with an ecological government, promoting a water transition, basin approach, and sustainable agriculture.

Regarding the Just Water Transition program, he emphasized that a fundamental strategy is the basin councils, in addition to capacity building programs in the agricultural sector for the new governance and irrigation support programs.

Likewise, he reported on the new Irrigation Law, which now incorporates aspects of energy efficiency into projects financed by the government, including hydroelectric, photovoltaic and distributed generation

projects, that is, connected to the electricity grid. Now, these projects can also include nature-based solutions to protect, sustainably manage and restore natural ecosystems for food and water security.

The projects that the new law can finance include: Artificial infiltration of aquifers, rainwater accumulators, fog traps, artificial wetlands, agricultural wetlands or wet ponds, infiltration ditches, permeable or open sections in canals, irrigation projects for agroforestry, irrigation projects wetland restoration, irrigation systems for regenerative agriculture, plant barriers, ancestral practices of nature-based solutions, among others.

2. Intervention Mr. Luis Rodolfo Castro, Vice Minister of Water of Guatemala

The Vice Minister referred to different actions that are being carried out from Guatemala:

- Vice Ministry of Water created in 2021. Committed to comply with the 2030 Agenda through the *K'atun Nuestra Guatemala 2032 National Development Plan*. It includes "Sanitation for all".
- Different technologies to meet target 6.3 of the SDGs, referring to wastewater treatment. This, promoting anaerobic and aerobic technologies. There are different sources of water, but he stresses the importance of caring for groundwater. At the moment, they are carrying out technical studies to define the most convenient scale and wastewater treatment.
- Guatemala is part of the Trifinio Plan, which is related to the goal of cooperation. With them, they have a government agreement to promote the protection and conservation of hydrographic basins.
- In terms of local governance, six technical tables on water governance in basins are being developed, with whom the diagnosis of their main challenges will be carried out and a management plan will be defined.

3. Intervention Mr. René Mateo, Vice Minister of Soils and Water of the Dominican Republic

Vice Minister Mateo presented on the institutional issue and regulatory reform of the Dominican Republic. In this regard, the country has formed the Water Cabinet. This arises from:

- Inefficiency in the use of water for agriculture,
- The identification that a long-term State policy was required,

The Water Cabinet is motivated by the National Pact for Water, which refers to a new vision of the country, in which a multisectoral approach will be adopted in the management of water resources.

Among the achievements of the Cabinet, the Vice Minister includes the launch of the Water Law project, which is adapted to the creation of a Water Authority at the national level. In it will be concentrated all the tasks that until now were carried out in a dispersed way through different government agencies.

He noted that hydraulic infrastructure requires plans with a longer-term horizon than administrative efforts, requiring a 15-year outlook, so the Water Cabinet inevitably had to plan with a long-term perspective as well.

4. Intervention Mr. Óscar Rojas, Vice Minister of Water of Ecuador

He ratified the commitment to fulfill SDG 6. At the same time, he commented that the institutional vision is focused on 3 challenges (National Water Authority):

- strengthen institutionality and co-responsibility of the actors,
- Community participation,
- protection, recovery and preservation of water sources, public participation

One of the government's priority approaches is to address child malnutrition where safe water plays a fundamental role. Hence, he mentioned that they are formulating the National Drinking Water and Sanitation Plan; the Water More Water Strategy; the Updating of the National Irrigation and Drainage Plan; and focusing on multipurpose projects.

Regarding the presidential goals, distinguish between:

- Presidential macro goal: they have achieved 25 water protection areas, which are protection areas – increase the national territory under water protection to 284.00 ha
- Presidential Macro Goal: National Action Plan for the Páramo
- Macro presidential goal: Have 14 water funds

In regards to water and irrigation, he referred to the National Irrigation Plan, in addition to the preparation of the Comprehensive Water Resources Law.

5. Intervention Mrs. Veronica Sánchez da Cruz, Director-President of ANA of Brazil

Mrs. Sánchez's intervention included a context of Brazil regarding water and its link with food, being the country the fourth world exporter of food. In this regard, she referred to the National Water Resources Policy, where water is considered a good in the public domain and is a limited resource, with economic value. Within the multiple uses, priority was given to human and animal consumption. Regarding management issues, the policy considers the basin as the planning and management unit, and focuses on the development of decentralized and participatory management.

The policy has as objectives to:

- guarantee the necessary availability of water, in adequate quality standards
- integrated management of water resources
- prevention of critical hydrological events
- encourage and promote the collection, preservation and use of rainwater

In addition, Mrs. Sánchez's presentation pointed out that they are mutating to a decision-making process based on data and evidence, for which it is necessary to implement information systems. For this, they are working on a hydrometeorological monitoring network, which, in addition to hydro-climatic characteristics, incorporates aspects of water quality.

Regarding matters of regulation and regularization of water use, they are carrying it out through permits, which has allowed for better accounting and control. Through them, they guarantee multiple uses of the resource, promote effective use by encouraging efficiency, and considering the specificities of hydro-dependent sectors.

Finally, the Director/President of ANA Brazil referred to the establishment of a Water Availability Reserve Declaration (DRDH) that indicates the operating conditions of reservoirs and water systems. This has made it possible to understand the complete regulatory cycle of water systems, improving regulation than

the norm, in addition to allowing participatory management, guaranteeing multiple uses, and considering the different hydrological conditions and environmental limitations.

6. Intervention Mr. Ángel Caviedes, Head of the Innovation Unit, Ministry of Energy of Chile

Mr. Caviedes began his presentation by indicating the challenges that climate change imposes in matters of water and energy, also highlighting the opportunities. He highlighted the Chilean tendency to move towards the use of renewable and clean energy, in this context of global climate crisis, where solar projects, including concentrated solar power (*CSP*), and wind power, have been increasing. Hydropower projects, once seen as a solid renewable energy option, are slowing down.

The Climate Change Framework Law mandates Chile's legal commitment to be carbon neutral by the year 2050. Green Hydrogen and desalination are opportunities to move towards this commitment to achieve carbon neutrality and boost the economy in a sustainable way.

In addition, he highlights two initiatives:

- National H₂V and desalination strategy: Seeks to replace the diesel engines of a type of truck, the CAEX, with fuel cells based on H₂V. They estimate that replacing 100% of these engines would generate an 81% reduction in GHG emissions from mining, which is equivalent to 5.5% of Chile's emissions.
- Operationalization of a 2023-2030 action plan, planhydrogenoverde.cl. This plan will be carried out through a participatory process around investment and institutional issues; sustainability; and local value, infrastructure and organization.

7. Intervention Mr. Gabriel Quijandría, Regional Director for South America of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

Mr. Quijandría began his speech by referring to the need for the Water, Energy and Food approach to also include ecosystems, since they are the key to achieving a balance between the different sectors. By favoring a single ecosystem function, for example, intensive agriculture, another ecosystem function is necessarily affected. LAC is the region that has lost most of its ability to provide ecosystem services.

At IUCN they are working hard on cross-border systems, identifying how to generate shared benefits for different countries. They have addressed or used hydro diplomacy as tools. In addition, they have studied that, in situations with cooperation, the results tend to be more positive for everyone than in situations without cooperation.

Nature-based solutions have been used to close social gaps, but now the concept has been overused. Mr. Quijandría proceeded to relate on how IUCN is working on the development of a conceptual model with indicators, to really identify when a nature-based solution is being worked on, and when it is not.

He emphasized that it is necessary for the agricultural and environmental sectors to work together for governance of water resources at all levels, but above all at the local level.

E. open trading session

At the end of the second day of high-level discussions, a space was held to offer open interventions by participants in the room and virtual, in relation to the construction of a Regional Agenda for Action for Water. The foregoing, since, based on the messages and commitments arising from each panel, this collaborative document will be built. In this space, a voice is offered to those who have not yet been represented, on issues that have not been touched on (Picture 2). The panel was moderated by Ms. Elisa Blanco, from ECLAC's Natural Resources Division, who gave a quick review of the aspects already mentioned throughout the panels of the first two days.

In this regard, among the interventions, the following can be mentioned:

- Ms. Cristal Ange, from Fundación Herencia Ambiental. He highlighted the relevance of starting by considering how to implement this agenda, indicating that the diversity of knowledge is key, and especially ancestral knowledge.
- Mr. Colin Heron, from GWP, indicated the relevance of the processes being plural, inclusive and with the participation of the different actors, that the plans have associated actions and monitoring. Here, many times, there are difficult conversations, and it requires strong political leadership to sustain those conversations.
- Mr. Helio Suleiman, from the Alto Tietê Hydrographic Basin Agency Foundation (in Portuguese, the Fundação Agência da Bacia Hidrográfica do Alto Tietê, FABHAT), raised the question of how to get countries to commit.
- Mr. Alexánder López from the United Nations Secretariat on Transboundary Basins and International Lakes, indicated the relevance of recognizing that LAC is a region of transboundary basins and that it should be a high priority issue on the Agenda. He also stressed that the main deficit is institutional, requiring international agreements. In addition, he indicated that the work with the accelerators that the United Nations has proposed should be supported.
- Ms. Miriam Medina, from Amnesty International's Coordination of Original Peoples, highlighted concern about the green hydrogen proposal, questioning its sustainability in terms of water use.
- The Vice Minister of Drinking Water and Basic Sanitation of Bolivia, Mr. Carmelo Valda, called for leading a common regional position against developed countries on climate issues; rethink institutional mechanisms to promote a resilience approach; facilitate local, nutritional food production, with regenerative practices and agrodiversity ; change the anthropocentric vision; recognize the water management authorities of the local communities of indigenous peoples.
- Mrs. Maryury Paguaga, President of the Nicaraguan Dipilto River Basin Committee, points out the need for the presence of women and youth in decision-making, in addition to the establishment of public-private alliances.



Picture 2. Open trading session. In the photograph, Cristal Ande, Environmental Heritage Foundation, offering her message.

Cross-cutting aspects that emerged from the online discussion are the relevance of accepting and promoting compliance with international treaties, the need to focus on information and data gaps, as well as aspects of social justice.

In summary, the aspects highlighted from this open panel were the relevance of education and ancestral knowledge, and that these elements are reflected in the region's policies and agreements. The opportunity to take advantage of innovative management models, make use of international initiatives, new conflict resolution mechanisms and hydro-politics that are emerging was highlighted. These can support the development and encourage the sustainability of transnational agreements and plans. The need to promote coordinated management and development of water, land and related resources is evident, without forgetting the participation of women, youth and representatives of territories or communities that are generally marginalized in these discussions.

III. Technical conference: Brainstorming solutions to value water and accelerate the achievement of SDG 6 in LAC

A. key messages

This day focused on the presentation of concrete solutions that are being carried out in the region to shorten the gaps in the 2030 Agenda in terms of water. To populate this section with local actions and/or solutions, an open call was made, to which close to 200 applications arrived. A first selection was carried out by reviewing the submitted abstract documents. The final selection process was carried out virtually, where rounds of presentations were made, in a space of 5 minutes each. These were evaluated by a Committee from where they were selected ⁹.

The actions and solutions presented are aligned with the **United Nations water valuation principles**. The above, for example, in terms of considering the multiple values of water, the different stakeholders in it and all the interconnections that emerge between human needs, economic well-being, spirituality and the viability of freshwater ecosystems that must be considered in decision making. The relevance of carrying out conciliation processes in an equitable, transparent and inclusive manner is also highlighted; to value and protect all water sources, including watersheds, rivers, aquifers, and associated ecosystems for current and future generations; to promote education and public awareness of the essential role of water and its intrinsic value; and to increase investment in institutions, infrastructure, information and innovation.

Here, concrete solutions were presented **that are being carried out in the region to shorten the gaps** in the 2030 Agenda in terms of water. Among the solutions presented, governance initiatives stand out, such as local cooperation projects on drinking water and sanitation in a municipality in Chiapas, Mexico; one on floodwater management and water pollution in Costa Rica; with environmental aspects with the initiative Adopt a River of Trinidad and Tobago ; and incorporating agricultural matters with a peasant community in Huancavelica, Peru. Likewise, innovative solutions focused on capacity development were presented, such as initiatives for education and empowerment of women in Brazil; considering ancestral practices and indigenous communities in Argentina and Mexico; and a project with schools and their students in Chile (Picture 3). Finally, in matters of financial innovation, the Andean Platform for Water Funds was presented; an innovative financing project for waterworks in El Salvador, as well as a small transnational hydroelectric plant in El Salvador and Honduras, managed locally.

With this, the technical day of raining down solutions was linked to the **acceleration framework for the achievement of SDG 6**, highlighting that for the progress of the countries it is necessary to work in these five spheres: financing; data and information; capacity development; innovation; and governance.

⁹Details of the process and its selection in the following link : <https://www.cepal.org/es/eventos/ya-se-encuentra-disponible-la-seleccion-participantes-al-panel-lluvia-soluciones-dialogos>



Picture 3. Elementary students from Escuela la Araucana giving their presentation.

B. Opening Brainstorming solutions to value water and accelerate the achievement of SDG 6

To start the sessions of the technical conference, an opening was offered to contextualize the relevance of having practical initiatives or at a more technical level, to promote the change sought throughout the 2023 Regional Water Dialogues. These are initiatives that are already taking place at the local level, and from this level they could inspire decision makers at higher levels.

1. Intervention Ms. Carmen Gonsalves, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Chile. Opening words

The Ambassador emphasized the relevance of this type of meeting. Without going any further, the same United Nations Water Conference was inspired by the work of the World Bank on the Economics of Water. In this Conference, the Netherlands has been a relevant actor, as one of the co-chairing countries.

From the Netherlands they are delighted to collaborate through their water valuation initiative (Valuing Toilet initiative). This is born from the culture that the Netherlands has of taking charge of climatic disasters, in its case, floods. In addition, they have been working on nature-based solutions projects, payments for ecosystem services, biodiversity projects, sustainable agriculture reducing the water footprint, among others.

She highlighted the objective of today's session, to provide more practical content, motivate and learn from each other, and with it, to reflect local knowledge in the policies and agreements of the sector.

2. Mrs Ati Quigua, Colombian indigenous environmentalist and pacifist politician belonging to the Arhuaco people

Her presentation focused on the Bacatá hydropolis initiative. Towards plural governance of water. This refers to:

- Think of natural heritage as a basis for land use planning
- Call to take into account the current cultural traditions of the original peoples
- Moving from human rights to planning that includes local solutions to water problems
- Seek water management for good living
- Improve the relationship of communities with their territories
- Urge the Basin Councils to include the voice of the community in decision-making processes

C. Session: SDG 6, Global Acceleration Framework and Water Valuation Principles: Towards a sustainable and inclusive water transition in LAC

Prior to the presentation of the case studies or proposed solutions, a space was offered to contextualize the session, providing the framework of the United Nations water valuation principles and the Water Valuation Initiative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, which they develop together with GWP and Deltares. Likewise, the pillars of the acceleration framework for the achievement of SDG 6 were reviewed. With this, a space for reflection is offered on how to consider and reconcile the multiple values of water within decision-making processes. Likewise, space is opened to reflect on the alignment of the principles of water valuation, with the pillars of the SDG 6 acceleration framework.

1. Conceptual framework of “ Valuing toilet initiative ”, Ms. Iris Bijlsma, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, The Netherlands

Ms. Bijlsma referred to the five United Nations water valuation principles as a framework from which to promote the achievement of SDG 6 and other objectives of the 2030 Agenda. These are:

- Recognize and embrace the multiple values of water
- Reconcile values and build trust
- Protect sources
- Educate to empower
- Invest and innovate

Through this initiative, she indicated that she was working with different local agents, motivating the adoption of these principles. For example, they are working with Peru, in the Chancay-Lambayeque river basin, a case that will be presented later in the session. There they contemplate several pillars: take risks into account, listen to young people to be more inclusive, offer a learning platform and inspiration for action. This type of initiative serves as an example for projects that are being carried out in other areas with similar challenges.

2. Acceleration pillars of SDG 6 in LAC, Ms. Silvia Saravia Matus, Natural Resources Division, ECLAC

Ms. Saravia Matus referred to the five acceleration pillars for the achievement of SDG 6 before 2023:

- In terms of financing, she indicates that investing 1.3% of regional GDP annually until 2030 can close the drinking water and sanitation coverage gap and generate 3.6 million direct jobs per year. The 1% increase in drinking water and sanitation coverage improves the gender parity index in school attendance by 18%. Investing in circular wastewater treatment systems and recovering methane for power generation and self-consumption has a cost-benefit ratio of USD 1.34 per equivalent person.
- Regarding the data and information pillar, she refers to the relevance of having timely, reliable and standardized information available within and between sectors. This data must be disaggregated for vulnerable groups.
- Regarding capacity building, she indicated the need to focus on technical capacities to improve the level of service offered and increase the creation and retention of jobs.
- In innovation, new incentives and access to practices and technologies are required to improve water management.
- Finally, in terms of governance, commitments and action are required at different levels and sectors: clear roles and strong institutions. Comprehensive solutions that analyze interconnections, increase synergies, and reduce trade-offs: the Nexus approach. Cooperation and coordination mechanisms in the water sector.

D. Session: Valuation of water and governance mechanisms in basins in Latin America and the Caribbean

In this session, actions and solution alternatives with a focus on governance were presented. This session was moderated by Ms. Fabiola Tábor from GWP, who highlighted the relevance of recognizing the value of water. To do so, the five principles of the SDG 6 acceleration initiative provide a basis for the sectors involved to agree. The session was commented by Mr. Guillermo Donoso from International Water Resources Association, IWRA.

1. Mrs. Marissa McMillan, Director of Watershed Planning, Water Resources Agency, Trinidad and Tobago

Mrs. McMillan highlighted the relevance of IWRM to ensure the inclusion of the various stakeholders in the basin through activities to involve the community in caring for water resources, education, reforestation and rehabilitation activities, work with schools, monitoring programs, water harvesting projects, etc.

She presented the "adopt a river" project whose objective is to protect, restore and sustain freshwater ecosystems to help and promote the sustainable development of communities. The foregoing is related to the principles of water, especially in terms of recognizing the multiple values of water (supply, ecological, recreation, spiritual/religious, etc.). It also reconciles values and builds trust; protect water sources, educate to empower the community, especially in schools. And finally, it invests and innovates through the Trinidad and Tobago Water Authority and private funds.

2. Ms. Yonalli Hernández, Municipal Government of Berriozabal, Chiapas, Mexico

Ms. Hernández presented a community management project, whose objective is the protection of water in a healthy way. It is located in the municipal government of Berriozabal, in Chiapas, Mexico, where there are more than 200 communities that have drinking water systems, without training, without community participation. Here, the water infrastructure lasted 2 years instead of the planned 10 years.

To deal with this, the program sought to strengthen local institutions. To this end, the local public agency, the Organismo Municipal de Servicios de Agua y Saneamiento (OMSAS) in Berriozábal, promoted the creation of 36 community water committees. To generate a change, they promoted community management and followed the principles of water valuation of the United Nations.

To date, they have built 22 water works, rainwater harvesting systems, construction of dry toilets, construction of storage tanks, sectorization of the drinking water distribution network. During the COVID isolation period, they created awareness campaigns.

They demonstrated that women can be drivers of change and through education they can be empowered to lead actions for water. With this, women and young people play an important role in decision-making

She concluded by indicating that without women and community organizations, there is no water.

3. Mr. Saúl Vicente, Fund for the Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC)

He mentioned the good practices of various indigenous peoples, which should not be missed. Here are included the Camellones or those of the Aymara Communities of the Atacama Desert, Cordillera Blanca Community, Huaraz - Peru with solutions based on nature.

He recommended the following:

- National legislation on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to drinking water and sanitation.
- Recognition of the worldview of Indigenous Peoples.
- Co-management of water resources between Indigenous Peoples and States.
- Participation of Indigenous Peoples, including women and youth, in the United Nations Water Conference.

4. Messrs. Alicia Bolívar and Melissa Céspedes, rural community of Barrio Hotel Cañas, Guanacaste and Distance State University, Costa Rica

The presentation began by reporting the situation of the rural community of Barrio Hotel de Cañas, Guanacaste in Costa Rica, located in the Central American Dry Corridor, with recurrent river overflows and consequent flooding in the rainy season, presence of arsenic in sources of human consumption and transitory climatic anomalies due to droughts, in the dry season.

To deal with this situation, a community organization led by women emerged in search of resilient mechanisms. The community became involved in the Community Network for the Prevention of Disasters led by the National Commission for Risk Prevention and Emergency Attention of Costa Rica, encouraging the creation of an early warning system. The system includes the identification of threats and vulnerabilities through participatory mapping, monitoring processes of the basin in the upper, middle and lower part of the information that is disseminated through a network of radio communicators and instant messaging, placement of alarm systems at strategic points. and planning responses to potential risk events. The group of women also worked on the elaboration of a mitigation work such as an artisanal dam made with recycled tires that allows the retention of sediments.

To deal with arsenic contamination in the intradomiciliary aqueduct system, a large-scale community union and organization process was carried out. With this, the aqueduct expansion and improvement project were achieved.

Despite the communal struggles that have ensured access to drinking water, the community of Barrio Hotel de Cañas presents important challenges to face, such as: maintaining constant communication, promoting sustainable development, generating skills and competencies, achieving political advocacy and achieve changes in female leadership.

5. Mr. Luis Miguel Chahuayo, Peasant Community of Santa Bárbara, Huancavelica, Peru

Mr. Chahuayo presented a project for planting and harvesting water in the headwaters of the basins, as a measure to address desertification and climate change. The objective of the project is to teach and develop methods that allow families to overcome droughts through strategies developed by previous civilizations, rediscovering methods that allowed cultures such as the Inca to supply themselves with water, as well as developing methods such as reforestation that allow nature to repair itself, such as stopping the erosion of the fields and increasing the absorption of polluting elements.

This is done by people from the community of Santa Bárbara, located in the city of Huancavelica, Peru. Located at 5,304 meters above sea level in the upper part of the Ichu River, dedicated to raising alpacas and sheep. Here, they have developed a project with four aspects: construction and recovery of dams, water collection from streams, irrigation under the amuna system, and reforestation with local species and others that can be adapted.

As values, he recognized teamwork, revaluation of AYNÍ (reciprocity), inclusion of families and gender, technical support between families and institutions.

E. Session: Development of innovative capacities and data for the valuation of water

This session had the objective of presenting solutions in terms of capacity development, data and innovation, as accelerators for the achievement of SDG 6. At the same time, it combined these elements with the principles of water valuation. The session was moderated by Mr. Reinaldo Penailillo de Deltares and the presentations were commented by Mr. Alberto Manganelli from the Regional Center for Groundwater Management in Latin America and the Caribbean (CeReGAS).

1. Mr. Orésteres Paul Escajadillo, Technical Secretary Chancay Lambayeque Water Council, Peru

The case project presented bears the name of Valuation of water in Peru. It is carried out within the framework of the second Memorandum of Understanding, signed on 04/07/2022 between the ANA and the Mission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. As a result of the project, the following future actions and commitments are proposed:

- Seek efficiency of at least 90% in the use of water by 2024.
- Update, digitize and share information on the user registry, rights to use water, operation and maintenance, financing, and others.

2. Mr. Diego Aguilar, Fundación León and ADELANTE, Argentina and Mexico

In rural contexts and socioeconomic vulnerability, the effects of climate change become more acute. It is here where attention to natural resources becomes scarcer, but even more urgent. In this context, in 2021 and 2022, the Alliance between Fundación León, AVSI México AC, Fondazione AVSI, the Secretary of International Relations of the Province of Tucumán (SERI), the Department of Agro- Food Science and Technology (DISTAL) of the University of Bologna and the ADELANTE2 Program of triangular cooperation of the European Union.

The Alliance seeks to strengthen itself through the exchange, adaptation and comparative systematization of its experiences, generating knowledge products and adaptable solutions that can be implemented through educational and cooperation projects and strategies. This alliance has worked, among others, on the Quinoa initiative, aimed at strengthening organizations of small producers in semi-arid rural contexts and the indigenous population of Mexico and Argentina. The foregoing, through sustainable agriculture and fair trade with a gender approach.

The Alliance emphasizes the implementation of virtuous strategies and systems for comprehensive and equitable water management through educational and cooperation projects carried out in Argentina, Mexico, Italy, Brazil and Kenya. The knowledge generated strengthens the partners in their role as actors and promoters of local sustainable development. The empowerment of women and young people is at the center of the initiative, being considered key actors in community water management. The activities are carried out in Mexico and Argentina, under the format of workshops, seminars and study visits. They are carried out in a face-to-face-virtual hybrid modality, to reach all the beneficiaries with a complementary training story, which culminates in February in Oaxaca, Mexico, with a congress on "Environmental education and comprehensive water management".

3. Students and teachers from Escuela La Araucana, from the Ovalle Polytechnic Bicentennial High School and a team from Fundación Un Alto en el Desierto (FUAD), Chile

Ms. Natalia Rebolledo and Mr. Nicolás Schneider presented on their project, considered the first national network of fog water harvesters and gray water recyclers in Chile. They indicated that they seek to form a green and human barrier, which will stop the advance of the Atacama Desert to the south.

With this, Fundación un Alto en el Desierto arises, incorporating educational programs in a playful way; creating, manufacturing and building prototypes, systems, games, music and events around water based on science. The above, through education from the basic level onwards. Through the Environmental Water Education Program, the Foundation seeks to develop learning about water scarcity and prepare school communities in the Coquimbo Region so that their students are more resilient in the face of climate change. The premise is that whoever values water, cares for it. Therefore, they show the value of the resource through their different projects. With this, they created a network where all people are equal and each person or entity has its role.

Then, Florencia Toro, Aylin Acuña and Gissell Flores, elementary students from the La Araucana School in Ovalle presented the project they developed on their campus. This involved the installation of a gray water filtration system and dewater/rainwater capture. For the treatment of gray water, the installation of activated carbon filters was carried out, turbidity analyzes are carried out in the water collection network, and the installation of solar panels was carried out to provide sustainable energy to the process. To use these waters, a drip irrigation system was developed, allowing it to be used in their gardens.

Next, Nelly Olivares, a high school student at the Ovalle Polytechnic Bicentennial High School, presented on the school's gray water recycling project, created jointly by students and teachers. They created an Environmental Water Innovation Academy, with a technical and a civic branch. Among them, they have held meetings and workshops with basic schools where the Un Alto en el Desierto Foundation also works.

Marcos Araya, also a student at the Lyceum, closed the intervention by singing a rap to raise awareness about caring for water¹⁰.

4. Ms. Cristiane Holland, Nexa Resource, Brazil

Ms. Holland presented an example of a mining company with social and environmental concern.

First, she indicated that they work with alliances for social transformation. Thus, its axes are environmental education, edu-environmental communication and mobilization and recovery of spring sources. In matters of environmental education, they have involved about 20 rural owners, developing about 80 activities focused on rural producers. In addition, they have carried out training programs for teachers and school students. Regarding environmental edu-communication, they have carried out the development of didactic material, training programs, and involved six schools in the area. In terms of recovery, they have managed to protect 47 sources of protected springs and put almost 30 km of fence.

They are based on social methodologies to create a positive assessment of these projects, whose focus goes beyond the economic.

5. Ms. María Fernanda González, Fregata Space, Spain

The project arises with the objective of collaborating towards the right to a healthy and sustainable clean and healthy environment.

Fregata Space is a technology company that has developed an Earth Observation platform for its monitoring, which includes air and water pollution variables anywhere in the world practically immediately. The foregoing, through the application of artificial intelligence (Machine Learning) on multispectral and hyperspectral images that come from different sources such as satellites, aircraft drones and local cameras.

Space project is for companies to have a technological platform that allows them to generate economic, environmental and social benefits according to their operation and sustainable over time, through the creation of proprietary artificial intelligence that will be offered to the different actors in the ecosystem, companies, governments and citizens. The ultimate goal is to educate and empower.

The use of satellite data in combination with field data provides useful information of the increase of this knowledge through innovative and cost-effective technologies providing high quality data in areas of difficult access.

The platform can calculate 13 indicators of water and air pollution anywhere in the world in 20 seconds. This has been achieved using more than 24 satellite constellations.

F. Session: Valuation of water applied to innovative financial mechanisms as a driver of change

Session that brings together the principles of water valuation and the accelerators for the achievement of SDG 6 in terms of financing and innovation. The session was moderated by Ms. Marina Gil from ECLAC's Natural Resources Division. The presentations were commented by Mr. Kenneth Alfaro of the Latin American

¹⁰ To listen to the song, use the following link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1S3gDiJmcAslUjPajstAv14jCnrBpuXTr/view?usp=share_link

Coalition of Youth for Water, and by Ms. Mirna Argueta of the Inter-American Association of Sanitary and Environmental Engineering (AIDIS).

1. Mr. Pablo Lloret, Andean Platform of Water Funds

Mr. Lloret referred to the relevance of the formation of an Andean Platform for Water Funds as a platform to promote governance.

He emphasized the relevance of water funds as local financial mechanisms to promote change. The funds support local governance.

Finally, he called for protecting and restoring water sources based on IWRM, mixing the public and private sectors, achieving sustainable governance mechanisms.

2. Mrs. Maren Barbee, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), El Salvador

She presented the Azure model, an innovative financing system that allows small water and sanitation service providers to develop projects. This, in terms of improvement and expansion of its system, as well as protection of water sources.

The Azure model links the objectives and capacities of local, national and international entities to overcome the barriers that hinder the development, financing and sustainability of water supply and sanitation services and projects. It consists of two integrated parts:

1. Azure Technical Services (AST): provides technical support to water system operators for; a) access capital to expand and improve water infrastructure; and b) to improve its capacity to operate and manage water and sanitation services. These services include training, design and engineering, systems diagnosis, financial and market due diligence studies, loan application, administrative support and monitoring. Collaborative work with governments and other key stakeholders is sought. In El Salvador, AST is run by CRS technical staff and the local technical service partner, Azure SA, a non-profit company. Both work in collaboration with the national water agency and municipal governments. CRS and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB- Lab) provided an initial grant of US\$1.2 million for the technical assistance component.

2. Capital mobilization: A combined financing model is used (Blended financing) that supports operators in managing funds from various sources to carry out their work with the aim of reducing the financial gap that exists in the sector. The sources of resources come from the same users in the tariffs of the services, municipalities, subsidies or loans. With the partnership between CRS and IDB they created Azure Source Capital LLC (ASC), a limited liability company (LLC) established in Maryland that provides affordable debt financing to water system operators through local financial institutions to enable them to upgrade and expand the water and sanitation infrastructure. ASC creates financial mechanisms and products in the region working with local financial institutions connected with Azure Technical Services. For example, in El Salvador and Honduras, trusts called FIDEAGUA have been established, which offer financing with technical support. Technical assistance and blended financing for rural water.

Mrs. Barbee stressed in her closing that investing in water is investing in life.

3. Mr. Luis Boigues, SABES Association, La Joya, El Salvador

He referred to the project for the construction of a transnational mini- hydroelectric power station, managed at the local level. The project is located on the border between El Salvador and Honduras. Here the community of La Joya is located, in the municipality of Përquin in El Salvador. The project was developed to use the waters

of the El Calambre river, which comes from Honduras to build a mini hydroelectric plant that would supply electricity to the community. At the same time, given that the Cueva del Monte community did not have electricity service on the other side of the border in Honduras either, it was incorporated into the project as well.

For its execution, the Honduran environment and natural resources authorities and the binational commission that emerged from an international resolution of the Court of The Hague are involved - a resolution that left a part of El Salvador in the possession of Honduras. Funding was mobilized through multiple institutions.

The mini plant is built on the Salvadoran side and consists of an intake, sand trap, loading chamber, loading pipe, generation booth with a 58 kW Pelton turbine and a 75 kW generator, regulation control and a bank of transformers. with all distribution lines of 10 km. From one point of the line comes the connection for the population of Honduras.

The construction was done jointly between the two communities by work groups. The administration is carried out by a board in each community that oversees collections (35 and 50 families each).

Investments are jointly financed, as well as maintenance. For the latter, they meet periodically to maintain transmission lines and equipment.

This is a successful project as it allowed both communities to:

1. Have electricity for the development of daily activities, especially for the work of women and extracurricular work of girls and boys in the community.
2. Savings in money and effort by having electricity in each home.
3. Provide training and education to members of the community in the work of operators, electricians, administrative aspects, equipment maintenance, and organizational aspects. It shows that it is possible for community people with a high level of commitment and ownership of their processes to keep a project of this category running and managing it.

Currently, it is the only binational mini hydroelectric plant between El Salvador and Honduras.

G. Preparation and adoption of the Regional Water Action Agenda

1. Ms. Rayén Quiroga, Head of ECLAC's Water and Energy Unit. Regional Water Action Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean

The Regional Agenda for Action for Water in Latin America and the Caribbean is the main result of the 2023 Regional Water Dialogues. It constitutes a compilation of the main ideas, efforts and voluntary commitments related to water, manifested during the aforementioned event. The action agenda seeks to advance and accelerate the effective progress of the countries of the region during the second half of the Decade of Action for Water 2018-2028 and contribute to the achievement of the sustainable development objectives of the 2030 Agenda. In particular, The Regional Water Action Agenda outlines the areas of prioritization and necessary efforts to accelerate the achievement of sustainable development goal 6 of "Guarantee the availability of water and its sustainable management and sanitation for all" in the region, with a vision and incidence in the medium and long term.

The Regional Agenda is conceived as a living instrument that can be updated and reviewed in the next meetings of the Regional Water Dialogues organized by ECLAC. Likewise, it can continue to be nourished by the work and research carried out by the members of the Regional Group of Experts on Water Resources in Latin America and the Caribbean and integrate new commitments from communities, countries and the

region. Therefore, the entire community of actors working for water, countries and agencies, are urged to continue working, redoubling efforts, expanding the scope of their commitments, strengthening the elements embodied in this Agenda.

This Agenda was built incorporating the main contributions obtained throughout the 2023 Water Dialogues. This dialogue community comes from various sectors, including the public sector, the academic world, private companies, international agencies, NGOs, and civil society, where the participation of youth networks, representatives of indigenous peoples, as well as middle and basic education students stands out.

The action points of this agenda also result from the 2021 and 2022 Regional Water Dialogues, as well as from the previous open consultations carried out by ECLAC throughout the region and with a focus on the Caribbean. They are also aligned with the United Nations Water Valuation Principles, and are contained in current regional agreements.

The Regional Water Action Agenda aligns and reinforces several previous treaties, agreements and strategies on water management and constitutes a call to action to mobilize all available political, technical and financial resources in and for the Latin American region and the Caribbean.

The Agenda highlights that the region needs to move towards a sustainable and inclusive water transition based on four pillars of action: i) guarantee the human right to safely managed drinking water and sanitation through a strong boost to investment in the sector, without leaving one behind; ii) promote regulatory and policy changes to promote equitable and affordable access, and thus eradicate water poverty, with innovative instruments that include social tariffs; iii) reverse the growing negative externalities associated with pollution, overexploitation and socio-environmental conflicts by promoting control and regulation; and iv) change the current linear management to circular systems to reduce the pressure on water resources, establishing a trend of decoupling between extraction and gross domestic product (GDP).

H. Closing



Picture 4. Closing panel, chaired (from left to right) by Ms. Jeannette Sánchez, Director of the Natural Resources Division, Mr. José Manuel Salazar- Xirinachs, Executive Secretary; and Ms. Rayén Quiroga, Head of the Water and Energy Unit, all from ECLAC.

The event was closed by the Executive Secretary of ECLAC, Mr. José Manuel Salazar- Xirinachs, who reviewed the most important milestones and messages presented throughout the Regional Water Dialogues (Picture 4). He took advantage of the instance to thank all the figures present, especially the agencies that supported the organization of the different panels. In turn, he highlighted the work and commitment of all those present in the construction of the Regional Agenda of Action for Water. The foregoing, considering not only the regional challenges in water matters, but also the wide range of opportunities that are presented for accelerating compliance with SDG 6. These commitments and messages will be taken to the United Nations Water Conference, highlighting the voice of Latin America and the Caribbean in these spaces. With this, the objectives of the event are considered achieved and the successful closing of the Regional Water Dialogues 2023 was carried out.

IV. Next steps

With all the discussions and issues dealt with throughout the 2023 Regional Water Dialogues, as well as with the national commitments made to accelerate the implementation of SDG 6 in Latin America and the Caribbean, ECLAC commits to continue working on different aspects.

On the one hand, the main conclusions of the event, as well as the different commitments expressed in the Regional Action Agenda for Water, will be presented at the United Nations Water Conference 2023. Through the participation of ECLAC, strategic partners and regional stakeholders, each of the chapters discussed will be reflected in multiple panels and parallel events. In this way, these commitments will become part of the UN-Water regional report of the event in New York, and will contribute to the development of the Water Action Agenda that emerges from the Conference. With this, the vision, concern, needs, lessons, and commitments of Latin America and the Caribbean will be reflected in this framework of global action for water.

On the other hand, to accelerate the achievement of SDG 6, LAC countries require timely, reliable and standardized information, as well as evidence of good practices. This is to allow them to develop and implement policies and plans that lead to sustainable and inclusive water management. In this way, ECLAC is working on the creation of a Network and Observatory for Water Sustainability (*Red y Observatorio por la Sostenibilidad del Agua*, ROSA) that consists, of strengthening capacities through the exchange of information and the adoption of sustainable and inclusive water policies. Here, a Regional Water Sustainability Network will be formed, with the aim of exchanging good practices, information, data and evidence to promote compliance with SDG 6 in the region. In addition, an Observatory for Water Sustainability will be established, a digital repository with policy documents and information on activities relevant to the achievement of SDG 6. The ROSA project contemplates the development of technical assistance to collect and use the indicators of SDG 6 to pilot countries, according to priority areas and needs. With these pilot experiences, a guide and a training course will be generated, both available online.

As mentioned, one of the main challenges for the achievement of SDG 6 in terms of drinking water, sanitation and wastewater treatment is financing. Along these lines, ECLAC will continue to work on the "Potable Water, Sanitation and Renewable Energies" project, financed through the *UN Peace and Development Fund*, with the objective of training and creating investment plans for local wastewater treatment plants at the municipal scale. This is being carried out on a pilot basis in El Salvador, Mexico and Panama. These countries are also involved in the project "Transformative reactivation: Overcoming the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic", financed through an ECLAC-BMZ/GIZ Alliance. Its objective is to generate policy recommendations (a roadmap) to promote the circularity approach in the drinking water and sanitation sector that promotes the use of methane and nutrient recovery, as well as the reuse of water.

Finally, ECLAC will continue working and disseminating the activities of the Regional Group of Experts on Water Resources for Latin America and the Caribbean. This group, made up of more than twenty representatives of international organizations working on water issues in the region, aims to join forces for the implementation of initiatives that accelerate compliance with SDG 6 in LAC.

With all of the above, and in order to maintain a space for high-level exchange to face the challenges in terms of water resources in the region, ECLAC will begin to prepare the next Water Dialogues 2024, which will fully address how implement the Regional Agenda for Action for Water, in order to achieve the commitments of the Decade of Action for Water 2018-2028 and achieve the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in terms of water.

V. Annexes

A. Detailed agenda of the Regional Water Dialogues

Wednesday February 1

High Level Conference

Opening (9:00-9:55)

Inaugurate the 2023 Regional Water Dialogues and announce the promotion of the region's commitments towards a Regional Water Action Agenda, and its contributions to the United Nations Water Conference.

Introductory and welcome words

- Ms. Maisa Rojas, Minister of the Environment, Chile (10 min)
- Mrs. Mariana Mazzucato, University College London (UCL) (10 min video)
- Mr. Manuel Otero, Director General, IICA (10 min)
- Mr. Mario Lubetkin, FAO Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean (10 min)
- Mr. José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, Executive Secretary, ECLAC (10 min)

Moderation Ms. Jeannette Sánchez, Director of the Natural Resources Division, ECLAC

Break (9:55-10:00)

1. Session: Global and regional context of water as a vector of development (10:00-10:30)

Present the challenges that the region faces in terms of water, to advance towards the ECLAC proposal for a sustainable and inclusive water transition in Latin America and the Caribbean, together with sharing international perspectives to achieve the Human Right to water and the progress global.

Panelists

- International Perspective: Towards the United Nations Water Conference, Mr. Henk Ovink, Special Envoy of the Netherlands to the United Nations (10 minutes)
- The Human Right to Water in Latin America and the Caribbean before the United Nations Water Conference, Mr. Pedro Arrojo, Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to Water (online) (10 min)
- Progress and challenges in water management: towards the water transition in LAC, Ms. Rayén Quiroga, Head of the Water and Energy Unit, ECLAC (10 minutes)

Coffee break (10:30-10:45)

2. Panel: Water and Sustainable Development (10:45-13:30)

Show achievements in water governance to move towards sustainable management, contemplating the reinforcement of existing institutions, the filling of institutional gaps and the facilitation of coordination between them.

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Moderation and context

- Mr. Mark Lambrides, Director of the Department of Sustainable Development, OAS (10 min)

Main Speaker


- Mr. Félix Ulloa, Vice President, El Salvador (10 min)

Panelists

- Ms. Maisa Rojas, Minister of the Environment, Chile (10 min)
- Mr. Pavel Isa, Minister of Economy, Planning and Development, Dominican Republic (10 min)
- Mr. Aníbal José Pérez, Vice Minister of Drinking Water and Basic Sanitation, Colombia (10 min)
- Mr. Erwin Mamani, Vice Chancellor, Plurinational State of Bolivia (10 min)
- Mr. Juan Carlos García, Minister of Public Works, Chile (10 min)
- Ms. Mar Gracia, Permanent Technical Secretariat, CODIA (10 min)
- Mrs. Silvia Saravia Matus, Economic Affairs Officer, ECLAC (10 min)

Dialogues and key messages

- Space for interventions and closure, Ms. Marina Gil, ECLAC (20 min)

Wednesday, February 1 (continued)	
High Level Conference	
Lunch (13:30-14:30)	
3. Special Panel: Launch of the Network and Observatory for the Sustainability of Water, ROSA (14:30-15:30) Official launch of the LAC Network and Observatory for Water Sustainability (ROSA), hand in hand with the founding countries. Present the main needs for capacity building for the development of evidence-based water policies in the region.	
ROSA Project Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Silvia Saravia Matus, Economic Affairs Officer, ECLAC (10 min) 	
national interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Pavel Isa, Minister of Economy, Planning and Development, Dominican Republic (10 min) Mr. Aníbal José Pérez, Vice Minister of Drinking Water and Basic Sanitation, Colombia (10 min) Mr. Carmelo Valda, Vice Minister of Drinking Water and Basic Sanitation, Plurinational State of Bolivia (10 min) Mr. Leonidas Rodríguez, National Water Council, Panama (10 min) Mr. Jorge Castaneda, ASA President, El Salvador (10 min) 	
4. Panel: Water and Climate (15:30-17:00) Present the challenges of the Caribbean countries in terms of the risk of suffering climate change impacts related to water, and present the advances for its management: both in improving resilience, as well as in disaster risk reduction, and Integrated water resources management(GIRH). <i>In co-organization with WMO and UNESCO</i>	
<div>    </div>	
Moderation and context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Diane Quarless, Director of the Caribbean Subregional Headquarters, ECLAC (10 min) Ms. Rayén Quiroga, Head of the Water and Energy Unit, ECLAC (10 min) 	
Panelists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Matthew Samuda, Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Economic Growth, Jamaica (10 min) Mr. Konris Maynard, Minister of Infrastructure and Public Services, Saint Kitts and Nevis (online) (10 min) Ms. Shaira Ali, Water and Sewerage Authority, Trinidad and Tobago (online) (10 min) Mr. Julián Báez, Director Regional Office, World Meteorological Organization (WMO) (10 min) Mr. Miguel Doria, Specialist and program coordinator, UNESCO (10 min) 	
Dialogues and key messages Space for interventions and closure, Mr. Julián Baez, Director Regional Office, WMO (10 min)	
Closing Remarks High Level Conference (17:00-17:10) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Jeannette Sánchez, Director of the Natural Resources Division, ECLAC 	
Group photograph under the entrance tile to the ECLAC building (17:10-17:25)	
Cocktail in Explanada Norte (17:25-18:00)	

Thursday February 2
High Level Conference

5. Panel: Water, Financing and Health (9:00 – 11:00)

Explore investment mechanisms that allow the drinking water and sanitation sector to access new sources of financing, as well as show the benefits of investing in the circular economy for the sector.

With the support of GIZ, UNPDF and IDB



United Nations
Peace and Development Trust Fund



Moderation and context

- Mr. Francisco Canal, Vice Minister of Environmental Planning of the Territory, Colombia

Panelists

- Circular Economy and investment needs
 - Ms. Marina Gil, ECLAC (10 min)
 - Mrs. Sunny Guidotti, Regional Specialist in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, UNICEF (10 min)
- Investment plans and efforts in water and sanitation
 - Ms. Mariana Navarro, CONAGUA, Mexico (online) (10 min)
 - Mr. Rafael Reyes, IDAAN, Panama, (10 min)
 - Mr. José Carlos Revelo, ANDA, El Salvador (10 min)
 - Mr. Didac Borrás, Aguas Andinas, Chile (10 min)
- Challenges and examples of innovative water financing in Latin America and the Caribbean
 - Mr. Henry Moreno, Principal Specialist of the Water and Sanitation Division, IDB (10 min)
 - Mr. Franz Rojas, Director of water and sanitation analysis, CAF (online) (10 min)
 - Mr. Héctor Serrano, Principal specialist in water supply and sanitation, WB (online) (10 min)

Dialogues and key messages

- Space for interventions and closure, Mr. Diego Fernández, ECLAC (20 min)

Coffee break (11:00-11:15)

6. Panel: Water and regional and territorial cooperation (11:15-13:30)

Call for action on the need to strengthen regional and territorial water cooperation so that it is inclusive, intersectoral and action-oriented. Show your benefits at multiple scales and across sectors.

In co-organization with OAS and IDB



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Moderation and context

- Mr. Sergio Campos, Head of the Water and Sanitation Division, IDB (10 min)

Panelists

- Mr. Erwin Mamani, Vice Chancellor of the Plurinational State of Bolivia (10 min)
- Mr. Francisco Canal, Vice Minister of Environmental Planning of the Territory, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Colombia (10 min)
- Mr. Raúl Artiga, Coordinator of the Climate Change and Risk Unit, Central American Commission for Environment and Development (10 min)
- Ms. Alexandra Moreira, Secretary General, Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (10 min)
- Mr. Jorge Pedraza, Secretary General of the Andean Community (10 min)
- Ms. Lorena Larios, SEGIB Cooperation Secretary (online) (10 min)
- Ms. Liseth Hernández, Executive Secretary of the Trifinio Plan Treaty (10 min)
- Mr. Eduardo Ortiz, Advisor, Pan American Health Organization (online) (10 min)

Dialogues and key messages

- Space for interventions and closure, Ms. Rayén Quiroga, Head of the Water and Energy Unit, ECLAC (10 min)

Lunch (13:30-14:30)

Thursday, February 2 (continued)

High Level Conference

7. Panel: Water, Energy and Food (14:30-16:00)

Show progress and policies in the region that take into account the synergies and interrelationships of the water, energy and food/environment sectors, in decision-making and planning, in terms of the potential they offer for the achievement of the sustainable development commitments of the Agenda 2030.

In co-organization with FAO



Moderation and context

- Mr. Mario Lubetkin, FAO Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean (10 min)

Panelists

- Mr. Esteban Valenzuela, Minister of Agriculture, Chile (10 min)
- Mr. Luis Rodolfo Castro, Vice Minister of Water, Guatemala (10 min)
- Mr. René Mateo, Vice Minister of Soils and Water, Dominican Republic (10 min)
- Mr. Óscar Rojas, Vice Minister of Water, Ecuador (10 min)
- Ms. Veronica Sánchez da Cruz, Director -President of ANA, Brazil (10 min)
- Mr. Ángel Caviedes, Head of the Innovation Unit, Ministry of Energy, Chile (10 min)
- Mr. Gabriel Quijandría, Regional Director for South America, International Union for Conservation of Nature (10 min)

Dialogues and key messages

- Space for interventions and closure, Ms. Elisa Blanco, ECLAC (5 min)

8. Open exchange session (16:00-16:50)

Space for open interventions of participants in the room and virtual, in relation to the construction of a Regional Agenda of Action for Water.

Moderation and context

- Ms. Elisa Blanco, ECLAC

Closing Remarks High Level Conference (16:50-17:00)

- Ms. Jeannette Sánchez, Director of the Natural Resources Division, ECLAC

Cocktail in Explanada Norte (17:00-17:40)

Friday February 3

Conference :

Brainstorm solutions to value water and accelerate the achievement of SDG 6

Opening (9:00-9:20)

Provide concrete solutions to contribute to the sustainable and inclusive water transition based on the pillars of the global acceleration framework of SDG 6 (financing, data and information, capacity development, innovation and governance) and the principles for Valuing the Water of the Nations United.

In collaboration with:



Kingdom of the Netherlands

**Valuing
Water
Initiative**



Deltares



Moderation and context

- Ms. Marina Gil, ECLAC

Opening words

- Ms. Carmen Gonsalves, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Chile (10 min)
- Mrs. Ati Quigua, Colombian indigenous environmentalist and pacifist politician belonging to the Arhuaco people, (10 min)

Session: SDG 6, Global Acceleration Framework and Water Valuation Principles: Towards a sustainable and inclusive water transition in LAC (9:20-10:00)

- Conceptual framework of “ Valuing toilet initiative ”, Ms. Iris Bijlsma, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, The Netherlands
- Acceleration pillars of SDG 6 in LAC, Ms. Silvia Saravia, Natural Resources Division, ECLAC

Session: Valuation of water and governance mechanisms in basins in Latin America and the Caribbean (10:00-11:15)

Moderation and context: Fabiola Tabora, GWP

Initiatives and Solutions (5 min each)

- Mrs. Marissa McMillan, Adopt-a-River Secretariat, Water Resources Agency, Trinidad and Tobago
- Ms. Yonalli Hernández, Municipal Government of Berriozabal, Mexico
- Mr. Saúl Vicente, Fund for the Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC)
- Messrs. Alicia Bolívar and Melissa Céspedes, State Distance University, Costa Rica
- Mr. Luis Miguel Chahuayo, Peasant Community of Santa Bárbara, Huancavelica, Peru

Comments

- Mr. Guillermo Donoso, International Water Resources Association (IWRA) (5 min)

Coffee break (11:15-11:30)

Friday February 3

Conference :

Brainstorm solutions to value water and accelerate the achievement of SDG 6

Session: Development of innovative capacities and data for water valuation (11:30-12:30)

Moderation and context: Mr. Reinaldo Penailillo, Deltares

Initiatives and Solutions (5 min each)

- Mr. Orésteres Paul Escajadillo, Technical Secretary Chancay Lambayeque Water Council, Peru
- Mr. Diego Aguilar, Fundación León and ADELANTE, Argentina and Mexico
- Un Alto en el Desierto Foundation (FUAD), Chile (15 min)
- Ms. Cristiane Holland, Nexa Resource, Brazil
- Ms. María Fernanda González, Espacio Fregata, Spain (online)

Comments (3 min each)

- Mr. Gerardo Quirós, United Nations Development Program (online) (UNDP)
 - Mr. Alberto Manganelli, Regional Center for Groundwater Management in Latin America and the Caribbean (CeReGAS) (online)
-

Session: Valuation of water applied to innovative financial mechanisms as a driver of change (12:30-13:30)

Moderation and context: Ms. Marina Gil, ECLAC

Initiatives and Solutions (5 min each)

- Mr. Pablo Lloret, Andean Platform of Water Funds
- Mrs. Maren Barbee, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), El Salvador
- Mr. Luis Boigues, SABES Association, El Salvador and Honduras

Comments (3 min each)

- Mr. Kenneth Alfaro, Latin American Coalition of Youth for Water
 - Ms. Mirna Argueta, Inter-American Association of Sanitary and Environmental Engineering (online) (AIDIS)
-

Preparation and adoption of the Regional Agenda for Water Action (13:30-14:00)

- Ms. Silvia Saravia Matus, Economic Affairs Officer and Ms. Rayén Quiroga, Head of the ECLAC Water and Energy Unit
-

Closing remarks of the Regional Water Dialogues (14:00-14:30)

- Mr. José Manuel Salazar- Xirinachs, Executive Secretary of ECLAC
-

B. Regional Water Action Agenda

Preamble

The Regional Agenda for Water Action in Latin America and the Caribbean is the main result of the 2023 Regional Water Dialogues in the region, as input "Towards the United Nations Water Conference". It constitutes a compilation of the main ideas, efforts and voluntary commitments related to water, manifested during the mentioned event. The action agenda seeks to advance and accelerate the effective progress of the countries of the region during the second half of the Decade of Action for Water 2018-2028 and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In particular, the Regional Water Action Agenda outlines the areas of prioritization and necessary efforts to accelerate the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 6 "Guarantee the availability of water and its sustainable management and sanitation for all" in the region, with a vision and incidence in the medium and long term.

The Regional Agenda is conceived as a living instrument that can be updated and reviewed in the next meetings of the Regional Water Dialogues organized by ECLAC. Likewise, it can continue to be nourished by the work and research carried out by the members of the Regional Group of Experts on Water Resources in Latin America and the Caribbean and integrate new commitments from communities, countries and the region. Therefore, the entire community of actors working for water, countries and agencies, are urged to continue working, redoubling efforts, expanding the scope of their commitments, strengthening the elements embodied in this Agenda.

This Agenda was built incorporating the main contributions of more than 30 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, including 200 face-to-face participants and more than 2,000 virtual participants during the Water Dialogues convened by ECLAC in February 2023. This dialogue community comes from various sectors, including the public sector (made up of high-level authorities, the Vice President of El Salvador, 21 Ministers, Vice Ministers and Directors of Water in the region), the academic world, private companies, international agencies, NGOs, and civil society, in where the participation of youth networks, representatives of indigenous peoples, as well as middle and basic education students stands out. All gathered to analyze and discuss water between February 1 and 3 at the Headquarters of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, in Santiago, Chile.

The action points of this agenda also result from the 2021 and 2022 Regional Water Dialogues, as well as from the prior open consultations carried out by ECLAC with various actors in the region. They are also aligned with the United Nations Water Valuation Principles, and are contained in current regional agreements:

- SAMOA ¹¹Pathway, the internationally agreed program of action for Small Island Developing States (SIDS).
- Escazú Regional Agreement on access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Montevideo Strategy for the Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the framework of Sustainable Development by 2030, which was approved by the member states of ECLAC at the XIII Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean.

This Regional Agenda of Action for Water aligns and reinforces various treaties, agreements and strategies around water management, and constitutes a call to action to mobilize all political, technical and financial resources available in and for the Americas region. Latin and the Caribbean. In the Water Dialogues, the need and opportunity to incorporate the voices of all stakeholders was expressed, especially those of rural

¹¹Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway (SAMOA Pathway)

communities, the voices of the territories and of Afro-descendant, indigenous, women, children and youth groups. This Agenda collects, strengthens and unifies the regional perspective and voice around articulated actions to overcome the water challenges of the coming years. In addition, various participants expressed the need to have more binding action mechanisms for the region in the medium term.

During the 2023 Regional Water Dialogues it became clear that the region needs to move forward with great force in building a sustainable and inclusive water transition, which is based on four pillars of simultaneous action:

- i) Guarantee the human right to safely managed drinking water and sanitation through a major boost to investment in the sector, leaving no one behind.
- ii) Promote regulatory and normative changes to promote equitable and affordable access and thus eradicate water poverty, with innovative instruments including social rates.
- iii) Reverse the growing negative externalities associated with pollution, overexploitation and socio-environmental conflicts by promoting supervision and regulation.
- iv) Going from a linear management to a circular one to reduce the pressure on water, establishing a tendency to decoupling between the extraction and GDP.

As a transversal principle, modern, democratic and participatory governance of water in countries and territories is distinguished as a key element to achieve the actions that follow and achieve the goals contained in SDG 6 in the region. The areas of action and main commitments arising from the Regional Water Dialogues are the following:

1. Water and Sustainable Development

- ✓ Promote democratic governance of water through the strengthening of regional, subregional, national and local institutions and technical capacities for decision-making.
- ✓ Make visible the role of water as a vector of sustainable and transversal development for the achievement of all the SDGs.
- ✓ Design and implement public policies based on new models of sustainable development, production and consumption that allow progress towards economic development and water security, with a special focus on rural and coastal areas.
- ✓ Promote water legislation and increase public-private investment to universalize the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation managed with socio-environmental justice.
- ✓ Incorporate the gender perspective and the active participation of subjects of water rights (right holders), such as local communities, youth, indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples, vulnerable groups and ecosystems.

2. Water and Climate

- ✓ Reinforce the adoption of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) practices to increase resilience in the face of climate change and mitigate the impact of disasters.
- ✓ Design, strengthen, and implement early warning systems to reduce the risk of water-related disasters in coordination with affected communities, with special emphasis on the Caribbean subregion.
- ✓ Foster coordination between the water, territories and climate sectors through greater innovation and adoption of technologies as a means of adaptation to new environmental and climate conditions, incorporating strategies for the mitigation of Climate Change, which can incorporate ancestral

knowledge of indigenous communities, as well as the perspectives of communities vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

These action points are also contained in the joint CODIA-CIMHET Declaration ¹²of water and climate authorities of all the countries of the region in the framework of the High-Level Regional Seminar "Road to the 2023 Conference" (Dominican Republic, 26 October 2022) It is also consistent with the United Nations Plan "Early Warning for All" adopted during COP 27.

3. Water, Financing and Health

- ✓ Promote new water investments in quantity, quality and continuity to universalize access to safely managed water and sanitation with special emphasis on rural areas, in communities far from the centers and in marginal urban areas, so that public, private operators and/or communities modernize water systems and improve technical capacities related to water quality.
- ✓ Design incentive and regulation policies that promote innovation and the use of technologies adapted to each context and territory, using principles of circularity and conservation, rescuing ancestral knowledge of indigenous peoples, as well as nature-based solutions, in order to protect the natural water sources.
- ✓ Establish public-private partnerships (PPPs) and with various actors from civil society and local communities to access financing and promote a new culture and appreciation of water. In these lines, it is urged to promote fair rate schemes.
- ✓ Identify and take advantage of available and innovative financial opportunities, such as combined financial structures, multilateral guarantees, water funds, and bonds, among others.

Some of these aforementioned actions are contained in the Declaration of the VI Conference of LATINOSAN 2022 (Plurinational State of Bolivia, October 12 and 13, 2022), as well as in investment principles with environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria and recommendations of the 9th World Water Forum in March 2022 (Senegal).

4. Water and Regional and Territorial Cooperation

Promote regional water security through integration models that involve territories and communities subject to rights.

- ✓ Develop and implement public-private and public-community frameworks and agreements that help guarantee the sustainable use of water resources in transboundary basins and aquifers, through the strengthening of existing institutions and the creation of new institutions where they do not exist, legal and economic instruments, as well as social participation.
- ✓ Harmonize political processes for decision-making, monitoring, and management of shared transboundary waters, recognizing community management and indigenous peoples, in a framework of dialogue and following the lessons learned from the experiences of integrated watershed management in the region with a view to creating inclusive alliances for water.
- ✓ Generate and share information for the proper management of transboundary aquifers and basins, promoting spaces for South-South and triangular cooperation.

Part of these actions are aligned with agreements established by the member countries of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (OTCA), the Trifinio Plan and other basins in the region that have

¹²Conference of Ibero-American Water Directors (CODIA) and Conference of Directors of the Ibero-American Meteorological and Hydrological Services (CIMHET)

agreements and coordination mechanisms, as well as the conclusions of the 2nd Transboundary Water Symposium, held in Bolivia in December 2022, and the principles of the United Nations Water Convention.

5. Water, Energy, Food and Ecosystems

- ✓ Promote the integrated management of water, soil, energy and its relationship with ecosystems as heritage that feeds productive agricultural activities, energy generation and life in human settlements. It is to nature through watercourses where waste is also returned. The integrated approach promotes common intersectoral goals that are reflected in policies, plans and projects, remembering that there is no food security or sovereignty without water security.
- ✓ Innovate in the adaptation of multisectoral coordination instances at local, national, and regional scales, as well as participatory and dialogue processes for decision-making and implementation of programs and projects.
- ✓ Protect and restore ecosystems that are essential for the water cycle, electricity generation, food security and nutrition, such as glaciers, moors and wetlands, with adequate monitoring, strengthening and community management, enhancing water funds.
- ✓ Recover ancestral practices of food production and water use that are sustainable and aligned with nature-based solutions.

Some of these efforts are embodied in multiple instruments, such as the Andean Environmental Charter, which incorporates an axis of Integrated water resources management that, at the same time, is connected with axes that seek to conserve biodiversity and contain illegal mining and its polluting effects in the basins. It is also worth noting the various strategies promoted by the Central American Integration System regarding IWRM, sustainable agriculture and climate change. Likewise, during the last FAO Regional Conference (LARC37) the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean recognized the strategic role of water in guaranteeing the sustainable functioning of agri-food systems.

6. Network and Observatory for Water Sustainability – *Red y Observatorio por la Sostenibilidad del Agua, ROSA*

- ✓ The countries and the region as a whole value this ECLAC initiative for the construction and strengthening of capacities for evidence-based public water policies, which will have as a sustainable product a network of water actors and a regional water observatory.
- ✓ It is essential to strengthen institutional and technical capacities to simultaneously implement the pillars of the water transition, through new incentives and multi-stakeholder alliances, adopting the principles of water valuation and seeking to accelerate and realign the trajectories of the countries to achieve the goal. SDG 6.
- ✓ Promote the production of quantitative information in accordance with international statistical recommendations, and the exchange of information on water matters to strengthen water policies, plans and programs and monitor their progress.

7. Rain of Solutions to Value Water and Accelerate the Achievement of SDG 6

- ✓ Raise awareness, in all spaces, about the multiple values of water and ensure that learning on how to identify them for different communities and in its many uses, is shared between sectors, communities, cities and countries.
- ✓ Promote the Principles of Water Valuation as a tool to accelerate the necessary progress to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda. It is very important to disseminate them at all levels and encourage exchange, as well as sharing progress and cooperation on these principles in the region.

- ✓ Make explicit the social, cultural, environmental and economic values associated with water throughout its cycle, generating incentives and political and socio-economic dynamics for its management with greater efficiency and sustainability.
- ✓ Strengthen the education of children, youth and older adults on water values to empower different communities to participate in the construction and implementation of these solutions and improve decision-making that impacts the quality and availability of water in the context of change climate, affecting vulnerable communities with greater force.

Santiago de Chile, February 3, 2023.