

In Support of a Dedicated Water Goal



#watergoal

This year countries are negotiating a series of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as part of the United Nations post-2015 development agenda. It is important that water be reflected as a priority within this agenda in order to address the global water crisis. Country-level support for a dedicated water goal is essential as negotiations are underway.

Why water in the SDGs

Despite progress on the Millennium Development Goals, over 700 million people still lack access to an improved water source and 2.5 billion lack access to basic sanitation. Leaders must recognise that achieving progress on access to sustainable drinking water and sanitation is not enough for enhanced water security.

- Water scarcity affects 2.8 billion people worldwide, on every continent.
- Globally, water crises have been listed as a top global risk by the World Economic Forum for four years running.
- Of the US\$2.5 trillion economic losses from disasters so far this century, 70% are water-related.

Water is a key input and a potential limiting factor to our energy, economic development, and health goals. Any ambitious food security and energy goals will require increasing amounts of water.

A Call for Action

- **Water at the SDG table:** A dedicated water goal in the post-2015 development agenda will focus efforts around the global water crisis. Without such a dedicated emphasis, water issues risk being forgotten by the global community, threatening the progress of other human development efforts.
- **Country-level support is essential:** Although the UN-supported recommendations for post-2015 include a dedicated water goal, countries are continuing to negotiate this year. This is a crucial time for national leaders and governments to express the importance of water to their country's economic and social development and their support for a dedicated water goal.
- **Enhanced partnerships are needed:** Partnerships will be one of the means of implementation needed to achieve SDG goals and targets. For water, partnerships are crucial for success because water cuts across many levels of authority and across many disciplines and interest groups. As national development decisions are made, water stakeholders must be valued partners at the discussion table.

Dedicated water goal

A dedicated global water goal in the post-2015 development agenda will focus global efforts around this water crisis.

Without such a goal, water issues risk being forgotten by the global community, threatening the progress of other human development efforts, our environment, and our economies.

In 2014, the United Nations General Assembly approved 17 goals to serve as the basis of intergovernmental negotiations for a post-2015 development agenda, including a water goal, as follows:

Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Goals have also been proposed for areas directly related to water management, including poverty, health, food, energy, gender, cities, and ecosystems.

Multi-stakeholder engagement

In 2013 and 2014, Global Water Partnership facilitated a series of country-level consultations around a dedicated water goal. These consultations brought together thousands of people in over 30 countries, with broad participation from environment, agriculture, planning, and infrastructure sectors, including political representatives, government officials, and delegates from the private sector and civil society.

From these stakeholder consultations we found there was:

- Broad consensus that a dedicated water goal is fundamental within the post-2015 development agenda;



- Strong support for comprehensive and inter-related targets to advance integrated approaches to water management; and a
- Clear preference for flexibility for setting national targets, supported by clear definitions of terms and indicators.

It's time...

This is a crucial time for governments to express the importance of water to their country's economic and social development and their support for a dedicated water goal.

Global Water Partnership calls on national leaders to support a dedicated water goal, and we stand ready to support countries in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Timeline

In December 2014, a schedule for discussions on the post-2015 development agenda was released, with a commitment by countries that these intergovernmental negotiations will continue to be open, transparent, and inclusive. Key meetings include:

