



Transformative Futures for Water Security

A dialogue co-convened by IWMI

Eight transformative missions for science-based action for future water security

Transformative Futures for Water Security is:

- Eight South-South regional dialogues and one global conference, with representation from 55 countries
- Over a thousand participants from 8 stakeholder groups and 400 organizations

Water security is key to our collective future, yet many parts of the world today are deeply water-insecure. Progress on United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 must urgently accelerate, given rapidly expanding threats to water security for communities, countries, and basins. Water security is deeply intertwined with climate security.

Without immediate and bold action, water security is set to worsen.

To catalyze the international community to prioritize the sustainable management of water beyond business as usual, the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) created the Transformative Futures for Water Security initiative (TFWS), which now counts over a thousand participants from within and beyond the water sector.

Over the past year, and through a unique process that included eight virtual regional dialogues and a global conference held this February in Cape Town, the initiative convened representatives from youth networks, national and local governments, water user and advocacy groups, research institutes, and the private sector to identify critical gaps and opportunities in water research, policy and action.

At the heart of TFWS lies the question: **What are high-ambition, collective actions that will create strong alignment and convergence of knowledge and research, policy, business and on-the-ground implementation to deliver future water security?**



Transforming future water security with those most affected in the lead

Youth Co-Guardians

The TFWS process was co-guarded by 16 youth representatives from youth networks for water and science across the South. They co-designed the regional dialogues, harvested outcomes and co-facilitated the global conference agenda.



South-South Dialogues

Communities that are least responsible for the climate and water crises are often the most vulnerable to their impacts. TFWS included virtual regional dialogues led in Central Asia, Southeast Asia, Central and West Africa, East Africa, Southern Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East and North Africa.

An unconventional approach

Each dialogue gathered policymakers, user groups, funders and donors, knowledge generators, local governments, youth and participants from the public and private sectors to ensure equal representation across all stakeholder groups of the water community, and amplify the voices of the most marginalized.



Water Action Agenda

TFWS participants are now rallying around the missions to influence the creation of ambitious, action-oriented, concrete commitments within the UN Water Action Agenda.

To join our mission-driven coalitions, contact us at: TFWS2023@cgiar.org

Our sponsoring partners:



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"Young people are not only future leaders, but they are today's leaders. More than 60% of Africa's population is under 25 -- we are integral in shaping the future of water and solving the water crisis."

Derrick Mugisha, Youth Co-Guardian East Africa Representative



"science is broad and flexible. It's time to do more research on now we can facilitate the participation of marginalized groups, bring up their voices, and start integrating and bridging local knowledge with science."

Indah Salsabiela, Youth Co-Guardian Southeast Asia Representative



"The problem of collaboration between policy and scientific research is central. Strategic water resource management plans do not fit with the realities on the ground."

Dr Michèle Nken Okala, Youth Co-Guardian West and Central Africa Representative

The missions:



From the TFWS dialogues emerged eight transformative missions for water research, and policy and action around which new coalitions are rallying:

1. **Build farmers' resilience to climate change and water risks** by using climate-smart interventions and raising water productivity to transform agriculture.
2. **Make water decisions fit for the future** by integrating the full range of values of water and the objectives of multiple sectors and stakeholders and their tradeoffs.
3. **Overcome data and information barriers** by developing and operationalizing digital solutions for basins and aquifers worldwide.
4. **Deliver good water governance and transboundary cooperation** that is inclusive, participatory, equitable, accountable, responsive, and smart.
5. **Deliver sustainable, stakeholder-driven water sanitation and hygiene services** with accountable institutions, adequate information and policies to achieve universal access.
6. **Increase freshwater availability** through circular management of wastewater everywhere, new technologies for non-conventional water, and cutting non-revenue losses.
7. **Adapt to future water regimes and risks** with enhanced climate information, preparedness, management innovation and capacity development.
8. **Make water infrastructure future-ready** using ecological and built infrastructure that is complementary, equitable and resilient.



Drivers for Transformative Change

Systems do not transform by themselves. Transformative change only happens if crucial ingredients are present and can reinforce each other. Throughout the process we identified a set of drivers for transformative change:

- Multi-level water governance at the local, national, basin and global levels
- Multi-stakeholder dialogues to foster trust, inclusion & cooperation
- Research partnerships spanning boundaries of policy and action
- Local and indigenous knowledge, to facilitate solutions co-created by communities
- Integrated technical services across the water-energy-food-ecosystems nexus
- Gender equality
- Youth in leadership - co-guardianship of future transformation
- Valuing water - a resource that is not to be taken for granted
- Private sector engagement in catalyzing change
- Long-term and systemic financing
- Mindful media to build reflective societies
- Capacity building through water education & skills