



UN
2023 WATER
CONFERENCE

NEW YORK
22-24
MARCH
2023

Off-site Side Event: Turning the tide on the freshwater biodiversity crisis

Time: 22 March, 11:00 – 12:15 (EST)

Location: The Nature Hub, Apella, 450 East 29th Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY, 10016

One line description:

This side event aims to discuss effective measures to accelerate the achievement of SDG6.6, to highlight innovative approaches to upscale restoration efforts and to safeguard water-related ecosystems.

Coordination: German NGO Forum on Environment and Development (*Forum für Umwelt und Entwicklung, FUE*), [Forum Umwelt & Entwicklung \(forumue.de\)](http://forumue.de)

Contact Person: Matthias Goerres, matthias.goerres@posteo.de & Eileen Roth, roth@forumue.de

Organizing partners:

Alliance for Global Water Adaptation (AGWA)
German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)
Global Partnership on Forest and Landscape Restoration (IUCN)
Plant for the Planet (P4P)
Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF)
World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

Thematic interactive dialogues:

ID 3: Water for Climate, Resilience and Environment: Source to Sea, Biodiversity, Climate, Resilience and DRR (SDGs 6.5, 6.6, 7, 11.5, 13, 14, 15)

Tags: Indigenous Peoples, Scientific and technological community, General Audience

Draft Agenda:

11:00-11:02

Opening of Side Event (Moderation: Matthias Goerres, FUE)

11:02-11:10

Keynote on the Implications of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework on SDG 6.6 by Dr. Srinivasa Srigiri & Jean Carlo Rodriguez de Francisco (IDOS)

Panel “How to catalyze conservation and restoration approaches in freshwater ecosystems”

11:10-11:25: Introduction and Teaser Statement/Video of panelists

11:25-11:55: Talkshow / Panel Discussion with Moderated Questions

- AGWA: John Matthews / Ingrid Timboe – NBS/adaptation, Mexico City restoration of wetlands and other water reserves
- WECF: Monti Aguirre – indigenous rights and inclusion in freshwater biodiversity protection
- P4P: Yugratna Srivastava – Forest Landscape Restoration
- WWF: Michele Thieme – Freshwater Challenge
- IUCN: Tracy Farrell – Enact Initiative

- Moderation: Matthias Goerres (FUE)

11:55-12:10: Audience Questions & Interaction

12:10-12:15

Future outlook and call to action by James Dalton (IUCN)

Contact Details:

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Description of the side event:

“To protect and restore water-related ecosystems” (SDG 6.6) is the target with the narrowest time frame of the 2030 Agenda, supposedly achieved by 2020 yet remaining unaccomplished. Freshwater biodiversity holds an intrinsic value, but more importantly represents the very foundation of water and food security, climate resilience and equal living conditions in the context of sustainable development. Nevertheless, we are losing habitats and species diversity at unprecedented rates: Since 1970, 83% of freshwater populations, 88% of freshwater megafauna and 76% of migratory fish have been extinguished – twice the rate of terrestrial and marine ecosystems.

Freshwater ecosystems, such as rivers, lakes, and wetlands, provide a variety of services such as water purification, flood and drought risk reduction, carbon and nutrient sequestration. While one third of global food production comes from the world’s rivers, wetlands are the kidneys of the planet storing 600 Gt of CO₂.

This side event aims to discuss measures to accelerate the achievement of SDG 6.6 and to highlight approaches to upscale restoration efforts and safeguard water-related ecosystems: The implications of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework on the CBD, the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and national policies; the international funding of biodiversity and innovative financing initiatives such as ENACT, incentivizing small-scale solutions; potential additions to the remote sensing focused monitoring scheme of IMI; stakeholder collaboration beyond the usual suspects; local people with livelihood dependence on ecosystems and a multiplier function like indigenous people and gender sensitivity, in the times where inclusive multilateralism is being mainstreamed.