The theme of the 2018 High-level Political Forum on sustainable development is “Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies.” SDG 6 ‘Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all’ will be reviewed in depth during the forum.

Youth engagement in water governance is an essential contribution to achieve sustainable water security. Increasingly, youth and young water professionals are using innovative ways to contribute to the achievement of Goal 6. Youth are more than just beneficiaries of the 2030 Agenda; they are key actors in finding and implementing solutions to the current and future water challenges. Therefore, the active engagement of young women and men, being knowledge holders and innovators, in decision making processes in the water sector is key in shaping the future we want for all and ensuring that no one is left behind. It is important to move beyond the recognition of the contribution of young scientists, researchers, innovators and knowledge holders (including indigenous knowledge) to SDG 6, to finding ways of mainstreaming the application of their innovation and the use of their knowledge and the data they produce in decision making processes at all levels. The Youth Statement of the World Water Forum 8 (WWF), held in Brazil earlier this year, called for creating “legitimate spaces for the representation, inclusion and participation of young people and youth groups in high level political decision-making and organizational processes...”. One way of addressing this recommendation is by providing greater support to build the capacity of youth networks and to ensure gender and regional balance of youth leaders in global water policy processes.

The organization of Youth Forums during global water governance forums often serve as a key mechanism through which young women and men are included in global policy discussions. However, greater value may be gained from ensuring youth participate directly in the decision making processes instead of organizing separate processes for them. Therefore, greater political will is also needed to ensure more intergenerational policy dialogues within the water sector. Consequently, building on the intergenerational dialogue of the youth forum of the WWF and the results of the ECOSOC Youth Forum (January 2018), a side event promoting intergenerational dialogue between youth and key decision makers within the water sector is being proposed during the 2018 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. The side event will explore best practices and challenges in implementing and monitoring the implementation of SDG 6. It will look at tangible mechanisms through which intergenerational collaboration between youth and decision makers can contribute to the achievement of SDG 6. The interactive panel discussion will explore experiences and avenues for greater youth involvement in the implementation and monitoring of the SDG 6 (i.e., past World Water Forums, Budapest Water Summit, national activities) and identify the necessary follow up mechanisms.

Organizers: Water Youth Network (SDG6 Focal point within Major group of Children and youth), UNESCO-IHP, UN-Water and WYPW
Partners: UN-Major Group for Children and Youth, Dutch Youth Council (TBC), Science and Education Policy Association
Side Event – High Level Political Forum 2018  
Ensuring Intergenerational Policy dialogues for the achievement of SDG 6  
Tuesday 10 July 2018  
Conference Room A in the UN Conference Building  
1:15 – 2:30

Programme

The panel discussion will involve panelists giving a short intervention including one best practice and lesson learned in implementing the SDG 6. Speakers will also be required to show how youth can become more involved in these processes. These presentations will be followed by a question and answer section in which the audience will be invited to participate in the discussion.

Objectives:

1. To facilitate the inclusion of youth and young water professionals in discussions with decision makers about the follow-up and review of Sustainable Development Goal 6
2. To encourage the inclusion of youth perspectives in the forum’s ministerial declaration
3. To facilitate youth networks sharing their experiences or knowledge on implementing or monitoring of the sustainable development goals with decision makers

Moderator

Shabana Abbas, Major Group of Children and Youth and the Water Youth Network

Panelists

1. Anil Mishra Programme Specialist, Division of Water Sciences, UNESCO-IHP
2. Professor Eddy Moors, Rector IHE Delft (TBC)
3. Arab States: Country Representative
4. Africa Region: Country Representative
5. LAC Region: Country Representative
6. Asia Region: Mr. Katsuhito Okubo, Japan Youth Platform for Sustainability (JPS)
7. Diane Delava, UN Belgian Youth Delegate for Sustainable Development and Representative of the World Youth Parliament for Water (WYPW)
8. Representative from the NGO Sector
9. Science and Education Policy Association, SEPA (Young Scientist Representative)