

Concept Note - Session 2

Title: From Targets and Indicators to Action on the Ground: Implementing the UAE Global Framework for Transformative Climate Resilient Water and Sanitation

Time: 3.00 to 4.30 pm (Belem time)

Objective:

To look beyond COP30 and explore the work needed to implement the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience. This session will connect indicator adoption with the practical needs of monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL), and will reflect on what water and sanitation practitioners need to turn targets and indicators into actionable guidance, finance, and systemic resilience on the ground.

Expected Outcomes:

- Provide a forward-looking agenda on what is required post-COP30 (in terms of tracking progress but also guiding the implementation of the UAE Framework), to help Parties take an informed decision
- Highlight the need for practical guidance, definitions, and support tools for water and sanitation targets.
- Position water and sanitation stakeholders as essential partners in operationalizing the GGA framework thematic targets.
- Emphasize how implementation must be inclusive, iterative, and finance-enabled.

Key Questions to be addressed during the event:

- After indicators are agreed at COP30, what technical and institutional work is required to operationalize them?
- From the perspective of practitioners and after targets and indicators are agreed, what is missing in terms of definitions, guidance, capacity, and finance to implement the Framework (beyond tracking progress)?
- How can implementation support to the UAE Framework be aligned with existing UNFCCC mechanisms, thematic experts and agencies, finance institutions, and private sector priorities?

Format: 90 minutes

Time	Section	Speaker
10 min	Opening keynote	José Gesti, SWA
10 min	Presentation of the water sector's key messages (see below)	Tove Lexén, WaterAid
40 min	Interactive discussion about the key messages proposed, guided by questions	Moderator: Cristina Rumbaitis del Rio, UN Foundation (tbc) MEL expert • Emilie Beauchamp, IISD UNFCCC adaptation body representative • Rojina, NWP / LEG Chair / Adaptation Committee Co-chair (tbc) National water/sanitation ministry official • Brazil (tbc) Practitioner from the field • Mirindra Andrianantenaina, WaterAid Madagascar • Brazil Civil Society Representative Adaptation finance partner • Bapon Shm Fakhruddin, GCF (tbc) Private sector • Viviana Franco, Van Oord • Thierry Ndabigengesere, Vision Group, Burundi • Silvia Gaya, Director Private Sector Partnerships UNICEF's (tbc)
25 min	Interactive engagement with the audience	Moderator: Cristina Rumbaitis del Rio, UN Foundation (tbc)
5 min	Concluding remarks summarizing the agreed key messages to bring to the negotiations	Manuel Eckert, SIWI

1. Topics covered by key messages

1. On the work needed for operationalization of the indicators
2. On the need for agreed focus on guiding progress: unpacking concepts and menu of implementation options
3. On the need for agreed focus on guiding progress: coordination of stakeholders
4. On the need to align UAE Framework implementation with existing UNFCCC mandates, technical agencies and finance institutions
5. On transformative adaptation

2. Key Messages

Message 1 On the work needed for operationalization of the indicators

Adopting indicators at COP30 is only the starting line: tracking adaptation progress will depend on the work that follows to make them operational, measurable, and meaningful at national and global levels.

- Operationalizing the water and sanitation indicators under the UAE Framework will require coordinated action across national statistical offices, water and sanitation ministries, and climate institutions.
- Methodologies must be refined, data systems strengthened, and pilot testing conducted to ensure indicators are comparable, credible, and actionable across diverse contexts.
- Custodian agencies and international partners, building on the SDG6 monitoring architecture, will play a pivotal role in providing technical guidance, definitions, and tools to support countries.
- Linking national implementation to global progress tracking under the Global Stocktake will be key to ensuring accountability and sustained learning.

Message 2 On the need for shared guidance and implementation pathways

The UAE Framework gives water and sanitation a strong political mandate. The next step is to unpack key concepts, develop shared understanding of climate-resilient approaches, provide practical guidance and pathways to turn global targets into tangible adaptation results on the ground.

- Practitioners and adaptation champions need a shared understanding of core concepts such as climate-induced water scarcity and climate-resilient services to operationalize the water and sanitation and ecosystems targets.
- Technical coordination with specialized agencies and experts should drive this process, developing practical guidance and “menus of adaptation options” rather than negotiated definitions.
- Access to finance, technology, and capacity building must accompany this work to enable countries to design and deliver context-specific adaptation actions.
- Guidance is also needed to ensure that implementation is iterative and learning-oriented, allowing continuous improvement as risks and knowledge evolve.

Message 3 On the need for engaging all stakeholders for implementing adaptation actions

Turning the UAE Framework into real adaptation action requires the knowledge, leadership, and participation of all actors across sectors, scales, and communities.

- Effective implementation depends on inclusive collaboration between governments, technical agencies, water and sanitation utilities, research institutions, academia, the private sector, non-state actors, and local practitioners.
- The perspectives of women, youth, people with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and local communities must be embedded in decision-making to ensure adaptation benefits everyone.
- Multistakeholder partnerships bring innovation, local knowledge, and accountability are key ingredients for lasting climate resilience.

Message 4 On aligning the UAE Framework for maximum impact

The UAE Framework achieves far more when implemented in harmony with existing UNFCCC and water-sector mechanisms, not in isolation.

- Implementation should build on established bodies like the Adaptation Committee, the Least Developed Countries Expert Group, and the Nairobi Work Programme to avoid duplication and amplify results.
- As illustrated by the Baku Dialogue on Water for Climate Action, building on joint platforms enables coordination, continuity and coherence across COP-to-COP cycles and helps translate thematic targets (water and sanitation; ecosystems) into action
- Collaboration between climate-adaptation bodies and specialized water and sanitation partners ensures that technical substance (methodologies, data standards, country support) underpins global monitoring and local implementation.
- Aligning finance institutions and technical agencies with this collaborative architecture makes the global-to-local pathway for resilient water and sanitation systems more efficient, credible and sustainable.

Message 5 Water and sanitation as a drivers of transformative adaptation

Water and sanitation investments drive both incremental and transformative adaptation. They strengthen resilience in the short term while enabling the systemic changes that underpin long-term sustainability, equity, and development across all adaptation thematic areas.

- Transformative and incremental adaptation are not mutually exclusive. Incremental improvements often lay the groundwork for systemic shifts, and both are essential to address different capacities, risks, and contexts.
- Water is inherently transformational: resilient water and sanitation systems catalyze progress in health, education, gender equality, and economic opportunity.
- The water community is well-placed to turn the concept of transformative adaptation into practice through nature-based solutions, governance reform, locally led innovation, and climate-resilient infrastructure planning.
- Flexibility is essential: transformative change can be immediate or evolve over time depending on local capacity, context, and support available.
- Adequate finance, technology, and capacity building are critical to enable countries to move from incremental improvements to systemic, transformative adaptation.

