Concept Note - Session 1

Title: Indicators for Water and Sanitation under the Global Goal on Adaptation: What's at stake at COP30 and beyond

Time: 10.00 to 11.30 am (Time in Belem)

Objective:

To discuss the importance of securing a robust and balanced set of water and sanitation indicators within the expected list of the GGA indicators, while stressing their cross-sectoral relevance and avoiding a siloed approach. The event will highlight why water and sanitation indicators are politically and technically critical, not only for the Global Stocktake and Biannual Transparency Framework, but also as thematic enablers for resilience across Rio Conventions, Sustainable Development Goals and Sendai Framework.

Expected Outcomes:

- Reinforce advocacy messages for COP30 negotiations to retain balanced water and sanitation indicators.
- Clarify the technical/political rationale for ensuring cross-sectoral integration.
- Position water and sanitation stakeholders as essential partners in operationalizing the GGA indicator framework.

Key questions for the discussion:

- How do the proposed water and sanitation indicators contribute to the GGA objectives?
- Why is it important that water and sanitation are adequately represented in the final list of GGA indicators?
- How do water and sanitation indicators underpin resilience across other thematic areas?
- Is it possible that adaptation indicators are designed and used not only for UNFCCC reporting lines, but as tools that strengthen resilience across global frameworks such as the SDGs, Rio Conventions, and the Sendai Framework, recognizing that adaptation cannot advance in isolation?
- What roles could thematic stakeholders and custodian agencies (e.g., JMP, GLAAS, IMI-SDG6) play in ensuring credible monitoring and comparability?

Format: 90 minutes

Time	Section	Speaker
10 min	Opening keynote	Tove Lexén, WaterAid
10 min	Presentation of the water sector's key messages (see below)	Manuel Eckert, SIWI
40 min	Interactive discussion about the key messages proposed, guided by the questions	**Moderator:** Ingrid Timboe, AGWA **Speakers:** Experts from the UNFCCC-appointed indicator groups • Lucy Njuguna, Alliance for Biodiversity International and CIAT - Food expert (tbc) • Rohini Kohli, UNDP - Infrastructure expert (tbc) • Timo Leither, LSE - Dimensional (tbc) Custodian agency (e.g., WHO/UNICEF JMP, UN-Water IMI-SDG6) • Animesh Kumar, UNDRR • Tom Slaymaker, WHO/ UNICEF JMP • Sonja Koepel UNECE Representative (SDG 6.5.2 - Transboundary) (tbc) Climate negotiator or Party representative Invited Parties/ Negotiation blocks: • LDC Group • AOSIS • African Group • Grupo Sur • EU • United Kingdom

		• Sri Lanka (confirmed) • Australia <u>Water and sanitation sector advocate</u> • Jose Gesti, SWA <u>GGA Key Stakeholders</u> • Cristina Rumbiatis del Rio, UN Foundation • Timo Leiter, LSE (tbc) • AGNES (tbc)
25 min	Interactive engagement with the audience	**Moderator:** Ingrid Timboe, AGWA
5 min	Concluding remarks summarising the agreed key messages to bring to the negotiations	Water Pavilion - GGA partner (tbc)

1. Topics covered by key messages

1. The Number of Indicators in the Agreed GGA Framework
2. The Climate Rationale for the Water and Sanitation Indicators
3. Transboundary Dimensions to Indicators of the GGA Framework
4. The Integration Across Thematic, Dimensional, and MOI Indicators
5. The Role of Custodian Agencies and Thematic Stakeholders

2. Key Messages

Message 1 The Number of Indicators in the Agreed GGA Framework

The rigorous work of the UNFCCC-appointed experts should be recognized through the adoption of the 100 proposed indicators that include 10 water and sanitation indicators. This will ensure that all target components are tracked, enabling holistic action.

- A limited set of 20 to 50 indicators, not even systematically chosen for their contribution, will not deliver the holistic and integrated response the world urgently needs.
- Parties should recognize the advanced and informed work of the UNFCCC experts, acknowledging that their expertise has brought the process as far as possible within their mandate, and that the political process, given the limited timeframe, is unlikely to yield a more robust assessment.

- The water and sanitation indicators should be adopted in their entirety. The target reflects multiple aspects of climate-resilient water and sanitation, including water scarcity, water stress, climate-resilient water and sanitation services, and integrated management responses to climate hazards. Adopting only a few indicators would create severe gaps in tracking adaptation progress.
- The indicators agreed should be approached iteratively, directing action now while allowing for continuous refinement as new data, methods and monitoring systems are developed.

Message 2 The Climate Rationale for the Water and Sanitation Indicators

The ten proposed water and sanitation indicators are instrumental for tracking progress in building climate resilience. Although some derive from existing SDG 6 metrics, their climate rationale emerges when they are interpreted through the lens of exposure and vulnerability to climate-related hazards

- As recognized by the IPCC AR6, it is not possible to isolate the effects of climate change on water scarcity or quality from those of other human pressures. Therefore, the most effective way to assess climate resilience in the water management domain is to measure social and institutional aspects of it while mapping exposure to climate hazards.
- When disaggregated spatially and temporally to reflect climate risks **(**e.g. when applied to geographic areas identified through vulnerability analysis as highly exposed to droughts, floods, or sea-level rise), the proposed indicators, related to water stress levels (**9a01**), changes in water-use efficiency (**9a02**), and the proportion of bodies of water with good ambient water quality (**9a08**), become adaptation indicators. They allow countries to track whether water resources are being managed sustainably in areas where climate variability and extremes are increasing vulnerability.
- The indicators proposed will evolve as new data from vulnerability assessments (e.g. Target 10a) and methodologies become available. Parties should therefore recognize the value of the current set as a foundation for immediate action, while trusting that refinement over time will enhance climate attribution.

Message 3 Transboundary Dimensions to Indicators of the GGA Framework

As recognized in Article 18 of the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience, climate change impacts are often transboundary in nature and may involve complex, cascading risks. The indicators to be agreed under the GGA should therefore reflect and reinforce this dimension.

- Indicator **9a04**, on the proportion of basin areas and cryosphere systems with climate adaptation plans, should be retained.
- Disaggregation at the transboundary level, for these and related indicators is vital to capture regional climate impacts, including changes in water availability, water quality degradation, and increased flood risks that transcend national boundaries.
- Existing monitoring efforts under the Water Convention and SDG Indicator 6.5.2 already provide valuable data and methodologies for tracking progress on transboundary cooperation. Building on this existing architecture can ensure coherence, avoid duplication, and accelerate progress under the GGA.

Message 4 The Integration Across Thematic, Dimensional, and MOI Indicators

To ensure that the UAE Framework meets the objectives set out for the GGA, Parties need to facilitate strong integration across thematic and policy indicators, supported by means of implementation perspectives spanning the entire framework.

- Water and sanitation indicators are central to advancing thematic and policy targets, with 54% of the other 90 indicators referencing them and all connecting directly to other thematic areas.
- Indicators on water stress (**9a01**), water-use efficiency (**9a02**), water quality (**9a08**), water management in national plans (**9a10),** and climate-resilient water and sanitation services (**9a05, 9a06**) provide measurable evidence of investments, inclusion, capacity-building, and technology transfer, directly informing means of implementation indicators.
- Policy-cycle indicators should be systematically disaggregated across all thematic targets and sectors to ensure inclusive and effective operationalization and implementation.
- The indicator set should balance outcome-level measures of resilience, such as water stress (**9a01**), water-use efficiency (**9a02**), water quality (**9a08**), and population using climate-resilient services (**9a05, 9a06**), with process-oriented indicators, like integrated water management (**9a10**), enabling tracking of progress on enabling factors and means of implementation across different time horizons.

Message 5 The Role of Custodian Agencies and Thematic Stakeholders

The critical role of custodian agencies and thematic stakeholders should be recognized as essential to ensuring credibility and long-term sustainability following the adoption of the indicators.

- The custodian agencies under the Integrated SDG6 Monitoring Initiative play an essential role in providing methodologies, data standards, and technical support to member states as they monitor progress for water and sanitation indicators.
- International agencies are well placed to support the refinement and operationalization of the GGA indicators, including the development of normative definitions, data collection, compilation and analysis methods, as well as expanding existing datasets to fit the GGA targets.

- Thematic stakeholders from different levels and backgrounds facilitate action informed by expertise from the ground and different realities, and are essential for ensuring effective and inclusive action that is sustainable over time.