



AWARe

Action on Water Adaptation and Resilience

Introduction

The initiative will catalyse inclusive cooperation to address water as a key to climate change adaptation and its co-benefits, as well as resilience. It aims at offering transitional adaptation solutions for planet and people, starting with the world`s most vulnerable communities and ecosystems, including water scarce countries.

Water is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights. It is critical to achieve the highest attainable standard of human health, as well as food, livelihoods, and ecosystems security. It is a key element of people`s social and cultural well-being and contributes to sustainable development. The Global Water Crisis is currently affecting billions of people worldwide and is projected to be further aggravated by increasing demand, changing water availability and an increasing impact of floods and droughts, which calls for greater international cooperation.

The AWARe initiative will build on and interlink the Water and Climate Coalition, the Adaptation Action Coalition as well as the Marrakesh Partnership Climate Action Pathway Water and contribute to the goal on adaptation. The AWARe initiative is also set to contribute to the successful outcome of the 2023 UN Conference on Water.

Mission

The initiative`s mission is arranged in 3 principal aims:

1. Decrease water losses worldwide and improve water supply
2. Propose and support implementing mutually agreed policy and methods for cooperative water-related adaptation action and its co-benefits;
3. Promote cooperation and interlinkages between water and climate action in order to achieve Agenda 2030, in particular SDG 6.

Workstreams



Promoting measures to relatively or absolutely decouple economic growth from freshwater use and degradation¹ (One lead Country + Members + UNEP)



Green water is accounted for in developing national utilization plans, adaptation and mitigation strategies and protecting and restoring freshwater ecosystems (to decide on leading partners)



Cooperative analysis of river basin scale adaptation and mitigation options and risk of maladaptation and propose and support mutually agreed policy to advance a 'do no harm approach' (to decide on leading partners)



Support co-benefits of adaptation action in the field of mitigation, including promotion of sustainable low-emission and low-cost drinking water and waste-water management, sanitation policies and strategies, and water-wise energy pathways (to decide on leading partners)



Improved early warning systems for extreme weather events and prolonged droughts, which shall include the three components forecast, notifications, and means of communications, in the short, medium and long-term (to decide on leading partners)



Linking water resources policies with national climate action to reflect climate change long-term impacts on water resources and demand, and to support preparedness and adaptation measures (to decide on leading partners).

Delivery mechanisms

The principal delivery mechanism is ensured through The Pan-African Center for Water Climate Adaptation (this is to be scaled into other regions of the world according to future COP presidencies and champions that catalyse replication). This center will be hosted by Egypt. The Pan-African Center for Water Climate Adaptation has different nodes in supporting countries (or regional organizations) that focus on main activities and actions as listed below.

In close cooperation with AU, AMCOW and other relevant regional organisations.

¹Decoupling refers to the ability of an economy to grow without a corresponding increase in environmental pressure

Means of Implementation:

1. Finance: Coordinated financial support to local, national and regional action, including:

- ▶ water-climate adaptation activities in all sectors (e.g. irrigation, drought-resistant crops, least water, soil and carbon consumption per calorie, preparedness to extreme events, upgraded infrastructure, innovative technologies for enhanced water management, etc.)
- ▶ Optimal solutions to integrate water and climate action with a view towards leveraging co-benefits of adaptation and mitigation, (e.g. carbon sinks, carbon sequestration in agriculture, etc).
- ▶ Investment in improving and developing low-cost water supply (e.g. supporting non-conventional water resources such as recycling, reuse, and desalination using renewable energy sources)
- ▶ Joint investment programmes to ensure climate-smart and water-wise energy production, increase the water content and carbon uptake of our environment, support ecosystem services related to water and food security and improve water supply while doing no harm (Lead Country, Members + WB)
- ▶ Institutional arrangements to ensure long-term multilateral commitment (One Lead Country, Members, [UNECE] and/or ESCWA, UNEP)

2. Technology:

i. Research and Innovation: Organise regional cooperation on research and innovation:

- ▶ Innovation to develop low-cost water supply, sanitation and non-conventional water resources and provide data, analysis, methodology to predict future water availability, assess water/climate risks, improve water supply and demand management in all sectors
- ▶ Quantification of impacts of low emission energy scenarios on water quality, ecosystems and socio-economic conditions and incorporation into national and regional planning
- ▶ Scientific assessment of technological and policy tools to decrease water losses, improve water supply and enhance mitigation co-benefits including through decreasing demand for water and decoupling economic growth from water use and degradation
- ▶ Knowledge and evidence generation to show how the provision of basic services (such as WASH) is an adaptive response to climate change by building community resilience

ii. Data and information:

- ▶ Support countries in water resources assessment and water accounting;
- ▶ Support countries in its reporting;
- ▶ Publish a regional water report annually under UN auspices;
- ▶ Trusted water monitoring systems and information sharing on platform that's open, transparent and accessible for all;
- ▶ Cooperate with national authorities to improve their early warning systems, seasonal forecasting abilities and outlook capabilities, and issue flood and drought warnings at regional level. Providing technical advice on the needed action and means of communication of technical advice to targeted groups;
- ▶ Develop national water decoupling indicators and publish transparent analyses of water decoupling potential

3. Capacity building (trainings, technology transfer, knowledge exchange, roundtables and outreach activities)

- ▶ Local, national and institutional capacity development including risk analysis, crisis prevention, communication, inclusion, management of early warning system and disaster risk reduction. (One lead country, Members + SIWI + UNESCO)
- ▶ Improve capacity in water supply and demand management to foster water conservation, efficiency and reuse in all sectors, developing and utilization of alternative/non-conventional water supply including throughout existing WASH systems.
- ▶ Promote coherence: Integrate existing activities, initiatives and coalitions (Marrakech Partnership Climate Action Pathway Water, Adaptation Action Coalition, Water and Climate Coalition.....) based on a consultative process to ensure that different water and climate related COP initiatives are coordinated and synchronized
- ▶ Private-public partnerships to integrate water and climate stewardship programmes and decrease water footprint, catalyse and deliver long-term commitments to increase effectiveness of climate and water wise investments in food, energy and transport sectors (tbd)