The Sustainable Development Goals Extended Report 2025

Inputs and information provided as of 30 April 2025

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Note: This unedited 'Extended Report' includes all indicator storyline contents as provided by the SDG indicator custodian agencies as of 30 April 2025. For instances where the custodian agency has not submitted a storyline for an indicator, please see the custodian agency focal point information for further information. The 'Extended Report' aims to provide the public with additional information regarding the SDG indicators and is compiled by the Statistics Division (UNSD) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Storylines presented in this document may slightly differ from figures cited in the SDG Report 2025 text due to the timing of the submission and the subsequent updates received upon finalizing the Report.

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Target 6.1 By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all

Indicator 6.1.1 Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services

Custodian agency(ies): WHO, UNICEF

Target 6.2 By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations

Indicator 6.2.1 Proportion of population using (a) safely managed sanitation services and (b) a hand-washing facility with soap and water

Custodian agency(ies): WHO, UNICEF

Target 6.3 By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally

Indicator 6.3.1 Proportion of domestic and industrial wastewater flows safely treated

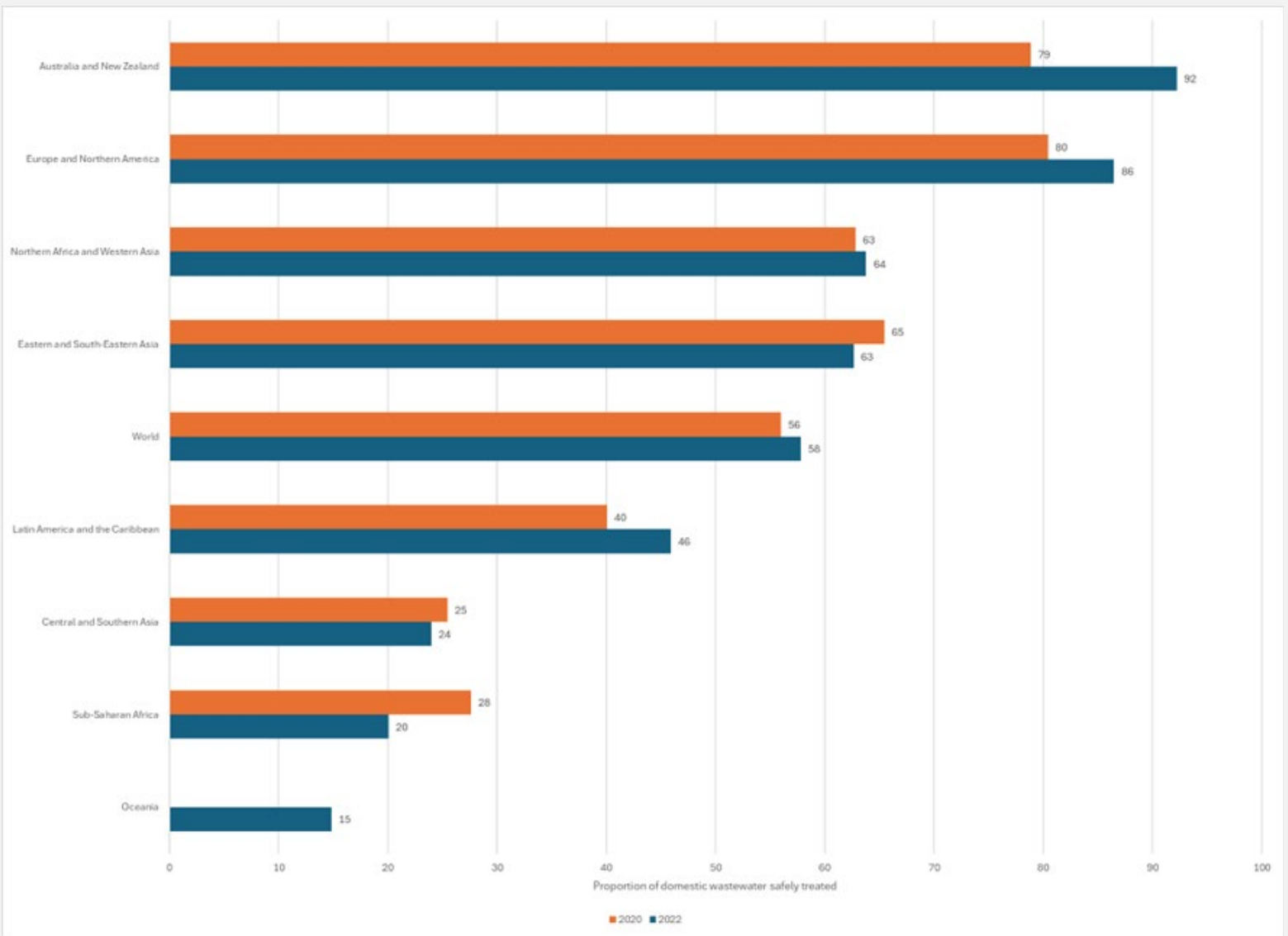
Limited reporting of wastewater data continues to inhibit the understanding of progress on SDG Indicator 6.3.1 towards halving untreated discharges by 2030

UN-Habitat and WHO have recently released the latest global report on the monitoring of wastewater for SDG 6.3.1. This report which includes a special focus on climate change, wastewater reuse and health, provides a comprehensive analysis of the current state of wastewater treatment, highlighting both the progress made and the challenges that remain. The report also emphasizes the importance of reliable data and effective monitoring systems to inform policymaking and investment decisions, enabling countries to prioritize actions that will have the greatest impact on water quality, environment and public health.

Regarding domestic wastewater, data were sufficient to estimate the proportion safely treated in 129 UN Member States covering 89 per cent of the world's population. Globally, 268 billion m3 of household wastewater was generated in 2022, of which 155 billion m3 were safely treated. The proportion safely treated (58%) represents a marginal increase compared to the estimates previously published for 2020 (56%). Regional disparities in the proportion of household wastewater safely treated are found to be broad (see Figure).

The report highlights that knowledge of the total wastewater generated for all sources and safely treated is relatively inconclusive, hindering informed decision-making in investment and policy development. As of the midpoint of the 2030 Agenda, significant strides have however been made in wastewater data reporting, although some work remains. Regarding the wastewater statistics directly reported by UN members, UN Habitat is still unable to make a comprehensive global estimate of the proportion of total and industrial wastewater treated due to the under-reporting - as data from both 50 per cent of countries and 50 per cent of the world's population are needed. We are very close to reaching this threshold for the total wastewater component, and it is our hope that we reach this goal in our next report, due in 2027. However, more challenge may remain regarding the level of knowledge of the proportion of industrial wastewater treated, with data only reported from 22 countries in 2022, representing 8 per cent of the global population.

Safely treated domestic wastewater (%) globally and by SDG region, 2020 and 2022



Storyline authors(s)/contributor(s): Graham Alabaster, UN-Habitat; Rick Johnston, WHO; Andrew Shantz, WHO; Florian Thevenon, UN-Habitat

Custodian agency(ies): WHO, UN-Habitat, UNSD

Indicator 6.3.2 Proportion of bodies of water with good ambient water quality

Integrating citizen-generated data with national monitoring programmes helps to fill the water quality data gap

The number of countries reporting on this indicator continues to increase (from 89 in 2020 to 120 in 2023), but analysis of these additional submissions highlights the critical data gaps in low-income countries. Two million water quality measurements were used in the most recent round of data collection, but only 60,000 of these were collected in the lowest-income half of the world.

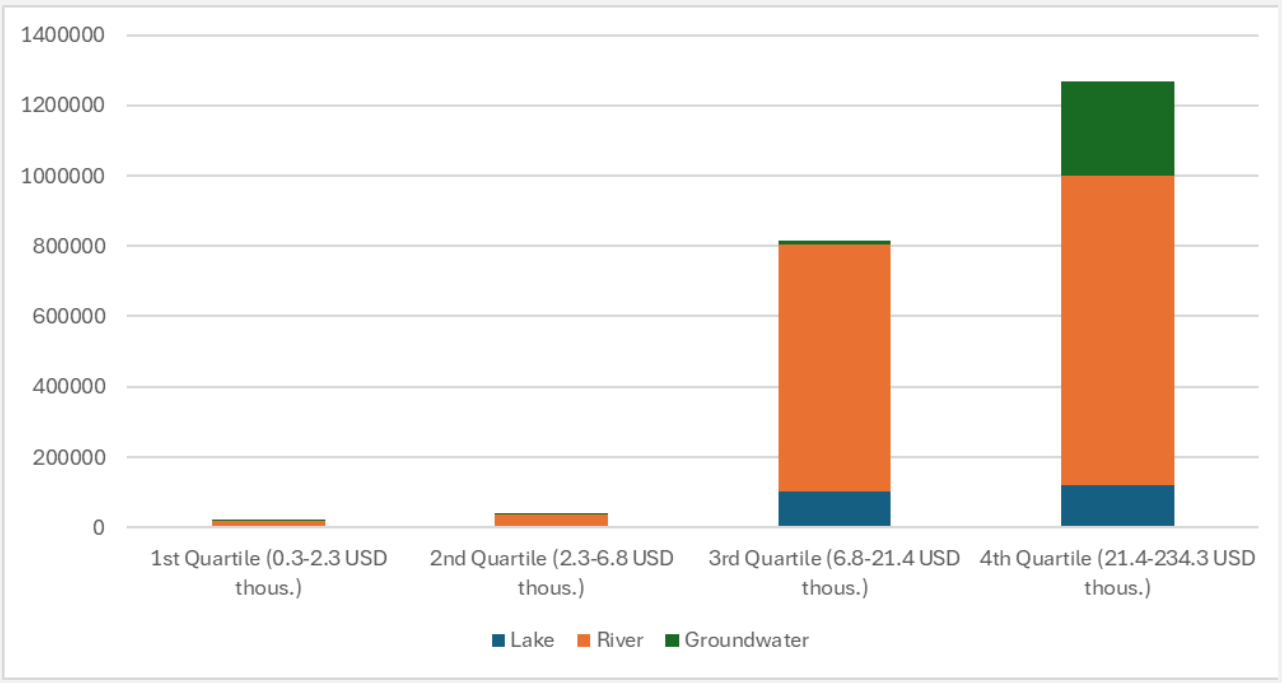
Robust information on trends in water quality is essential to understand how anthropogenic stressors on water quality are affecting our freshwaters and their ability to provide the services we rely on, but the message is clear - these data do not exist for the waters that billions of people depend on. By 2030, the health and livelihoods of 4.8 billion people could be at risk if current rates of water quality monitoring are no improved. It is not just the total amount of data that is a concern, but the water body types that are being monitored. Data collection rates for lakes and groundwater are far below those of rivers despite their importance for freshwater supply and freshwater ecosystem services such as drinking water supply and support for fisheries and agriculture. In many countrie they represent the largest share of freshwater, yet this is not reflected in the monitoring porgrammes that are essential for their protection. This is a key capacity gap that needs to be addressed.

New health risk hotspots emerge when we superimpose climate, biodiversity and pollution impacts on water quality data gaps. Countries with low capacity to monitor and assess their freshwaters are unprepared to understand the impact and the subsequent health effects, and are predicted to be the most affected by climate-related droughts and floods, as well as experience the greatest population growth with the associated wastewater generation, urbanisation and need for agricultural intensification. Water quality monitoring data are urgently needed if mitigation and adaptation measures are to be effective. Prioritizing water quality monitoring will help us to understand how our freshwaters are changing, and how to minimize health risks.

UNEP is working with partners on many fronts to help fill the data gap and to improve data for water resource management. To supplement the in situ data collected by national authorities, the three main approaches are citizen science, satellite-based Earth observation and modelling of water quality. For example, working through the national authorites in seven African countries, citizen-generated data are already contributing to national data to provide a more comprehensive picture of water quality. Sierra Leone and Zambia have gone further and have used these citizen science data for SDG Indicator 6.3.2 reporting – this was a first for SDG 6.

“More monitoring needed” can be an overused message, but is more relevant today than ever when the pace of change is accelerating, and the status of our freshwaters come 2030 is for many, imposible to predict.

Number of measurements reported by water body type and partitioned by GDP (USD thous.) per capita category



Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- Progress on Ambient Water Quality – 2024 Update | UN-Water
- Policy Brief - The role of citizen science in improving ambient water quality
- Frontiers | Empowering citizen scientists to improve water quality: from monitoring to action

Storyline authors(s)/contributor(s): Stuart Warner, UNEP; Kilian Christ, UNEP; Melchior Elsler, UNEP; Philipp Saile, UNEP; Dymtro Lisniak, UNEP; Moritz Henle, UNEP

Custodian agency(ies): UNEP

Target 6.4 By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity

Indicator 6.4.1 Change in water-use efficiency over time

Global Water Use Efficiency Rises, driven by Economic Growth rather than reduced withdrawals

Water-use efficiency (WUE) serves as a key indicator of how economic growth relies on water resources, reflecting a country's ability to expand its economy without overexploiting its water supply. Between 2015 and 2022, global WUE improved significantly, rising from 17.5 USD/m³ to 21.5 USD/m³, marking a 23 per cent increase. However, despite this progress, 57 % of countries still face challenges with low efficiency, with WUE remaining below 20 USD/m³ (Figure 3), highlighting persistent disparities in water resources management worldwide. Regional disparities are also significant (Figure 2). Oceania and Northern America and Europe exhibit WUE levels surpassing the world average, whereas Central Asia and Southern Asia record the lowest levels. These findings emphasize the need for targeted strategies and address regional challenges.

Figure 1: Trends in Global Water Use Efficiency (WUE) from 2015 to 2022

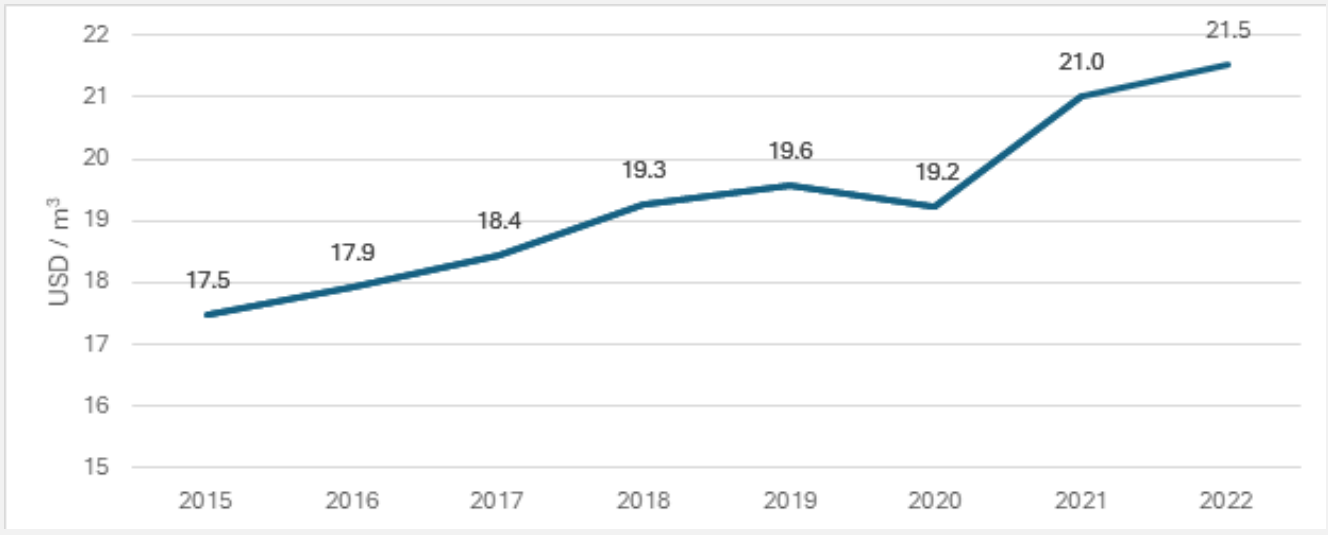
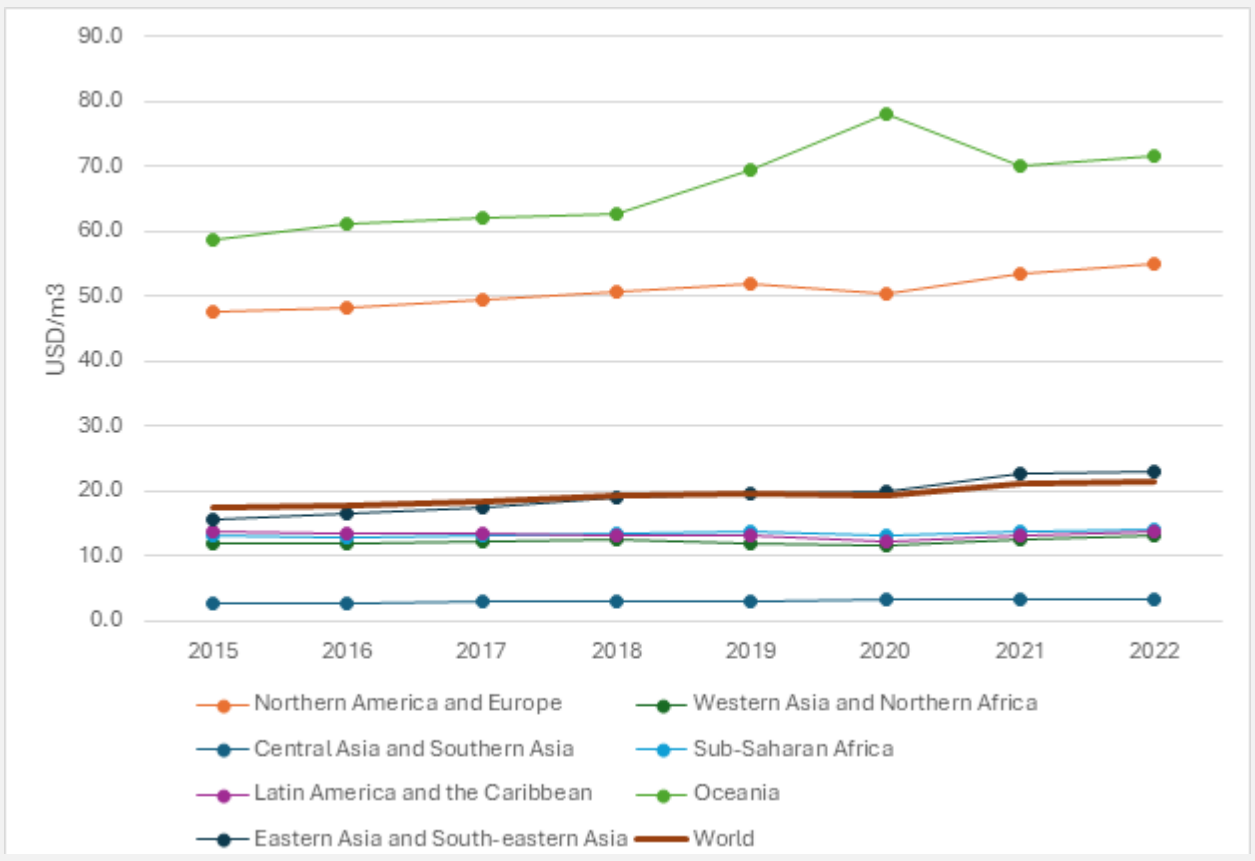


Figure 2: Trends in WUE (USD/m3) by region (2015 – 2022)



The increase in WUE has been primarily driven by economic growth rather than a reduction in water withdrawals, as total water withdrawals have remained nearly constant. Sectoral water withdrawal trends reveal shifting water uses between 2015 and 2022 – while agricultural water withdrawals remain steady, municipal water withdrawals grew by 10 percent, while industrial withdrawals declined by 5 percent (Table 2).

Each economic sector has made improvements in water use efficiency. In 2022, the industrial sector has a WUE equivalent to 38.5 USD/m3, the services sector 114.4 USD/m3 and the agriculture sector 0.7 USD/m3. Despite its low efficiency, agriculture saw the greatest relative improvement (39.5%), surpassing gains in the industrial (34.9%) and service (9.2%) sectors.

Figure 3: Percentage of countries by Water Use Efficiency (WUE) range (USD/m3)

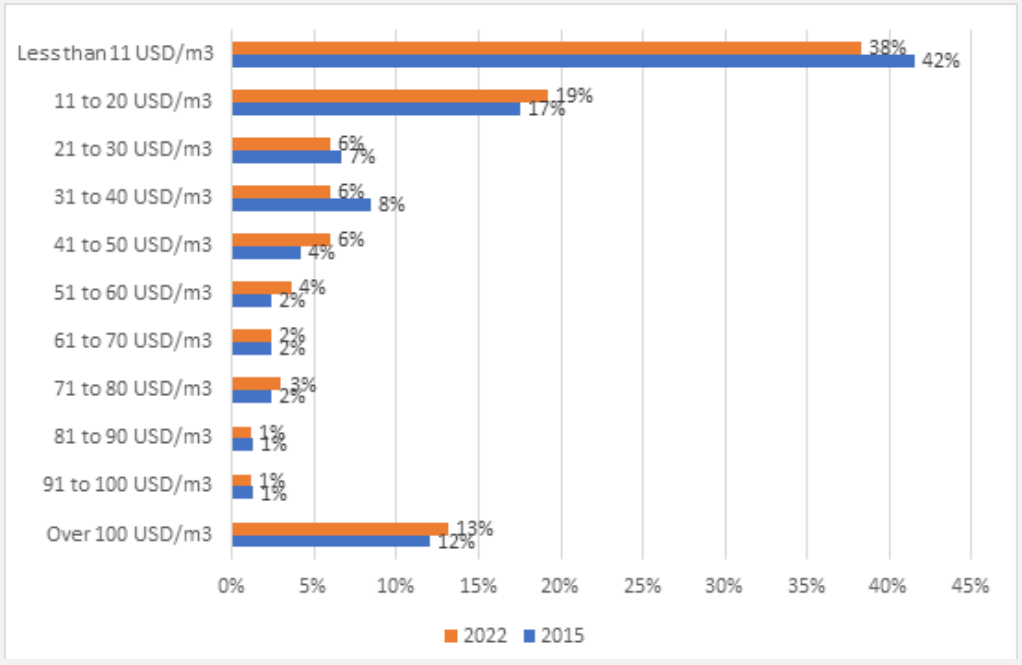


Table 1: Global trends in Sectoral Water Use Efficiency (2015 -2022)

Sectoral WUE	2015	2022	Percentage change 2015 - 2022
WUE Agriculture (USD/m^3)	0.5	0.7	39.5%
WUE Industry (USD/m^3)	28.6	38.5	34.9%
WUE Services (USD/m^3)	104.7	114.4	9.2%

Table 2: Global trends in Sectoral Water Withdrawals (2015 -2022)

	2015	2022	Percentage change 2015 - 2022
Agricultural water withdrawal [10^9 m3/year]	2868.59	2850.4	- 0.6 %
Industrial water withdrawal [10^9 m3/year]	640.75	608.67	- 5.0 %
Municipal water withdrawal [10^9 m3/year]	477.08	527.65	10.6 %
Total water withdrawal [10^9 m3/year]	3987.21	3985.80	- 0.03 %

These findings underscore the importance of sector-specific strategies to enhance WUE globally. In water-stressed regions, where scarcity threatens economic growth and development, improving water use efficiency is crucial. Agriculture, the largest freshwater user, operates with low efficiency making it a key sector for transformation. By modernizing irrigation systems, adopting climate-smart agricultural practices and integrating digital water management tools, countries can boost agricultural productivity while ensuring sustainable water use. However, achieving lasting impacts requires more than just technology, strengthening governance, policy frameworks and capacity building is essential to improve water use efficiency.

Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/a44498cf-bb0b-4120-b3d9-f8214d71cd7a
- https://www.fao.org/in-action/integrated-monitoring-initiative-sdg6/news-and-events/news/details/fao-releases-key-sdg-6.4-progress-reports-at-the-international-soil-and-water-forum-in-bangkok/

Storyline authors(s)/contributor(s): Patricia Mejias, FAO; Riccardo Biancalani, FAO

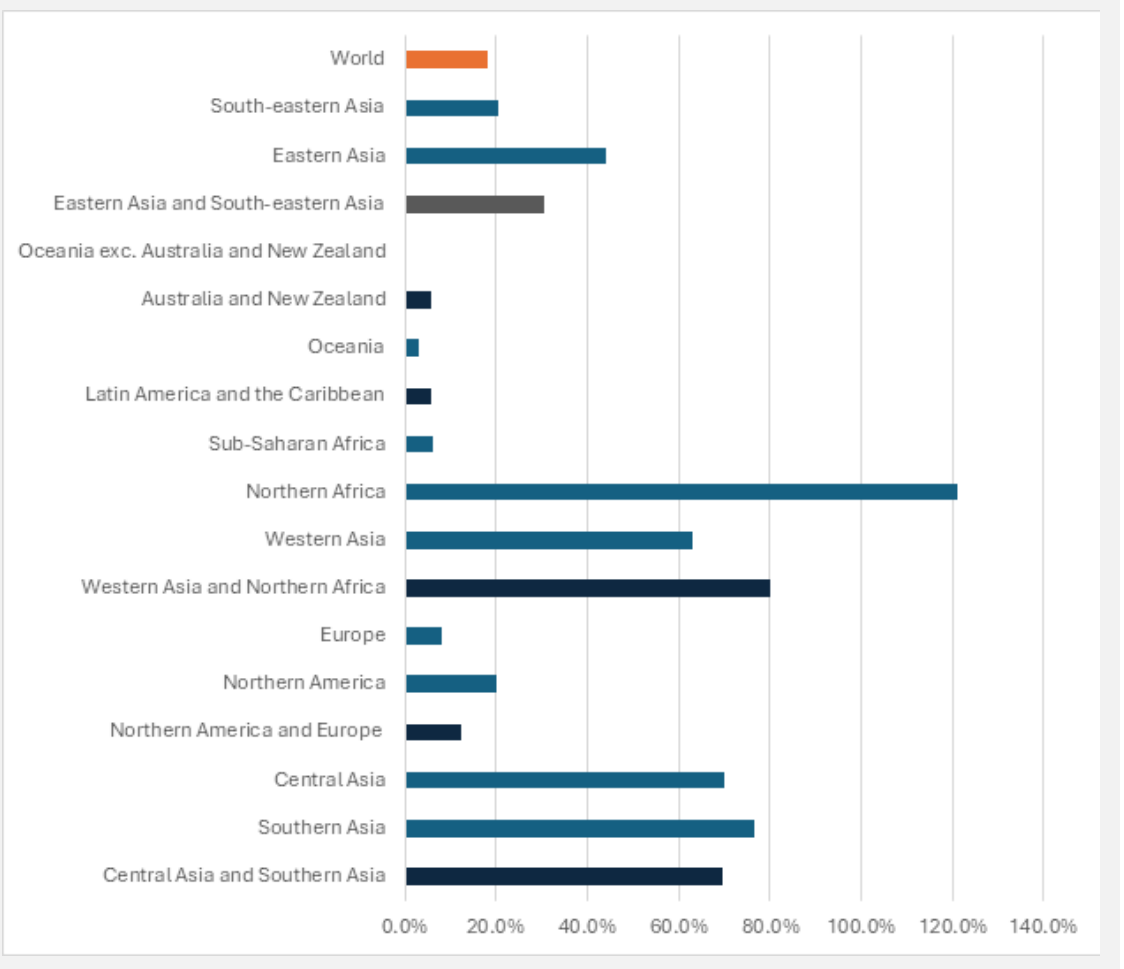
Custodian agency(ies): FAO

Indicator 6.4.2 Level of water stress: freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources

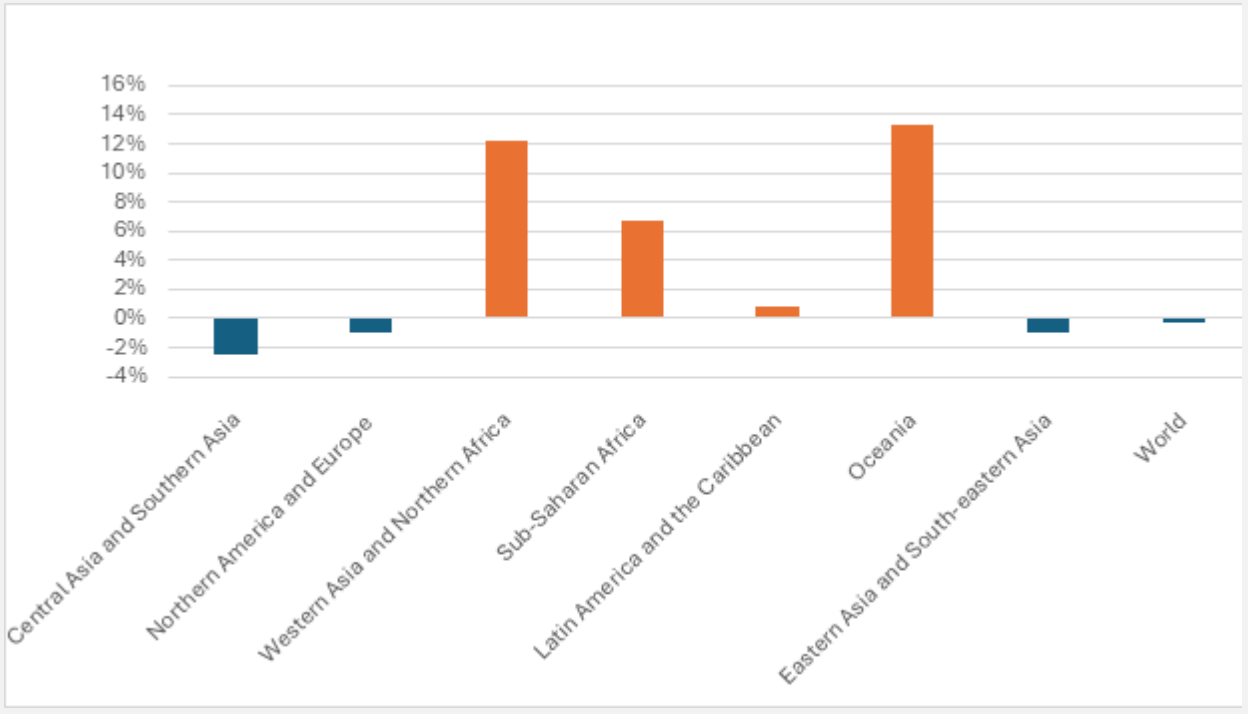
Uneven Water Stress Threatens Global Development

At global level, the water stress remained steady at an average of 18 percent in 2022, showing little change since 2015. However, this figure masks regional variations: while some regions maintain a low water stress, others face extreme scarcity. In Northern Africa and Western Asia, as well as Southern and Central Asia, countries face water stress levels beyond 75%, placing immense pressure on communities, economies, and ecosystems. The situation is particularly alarming in Western Asia and Northern Africa, where already high levels of water stress have increased by 12 percent since 2015. As a result, approximately 10 percent of the global population live in countries with high and critical water stress levels.

Level of water stress by SDG region and sub-region (2022)



Percentage change of the level of water stress by region (2015 – 2022)



Economic sectors also play a key role in shaping water stress levels. Agriculture remains the dominant user of freshwater, accounting for 72% of total withdrawals in 2022, followed by industry (15%) and services (13%). While agriculture plays a vital role in ensuring food security and driving economic development in many countries, it faces the growing challenge of water stress, making it both a contributor to and a victim, being a sector hightly vulnerable to the crisis.

To fully understand and address this challenge, subnational and temporal disaggregation of water stress levels is needed to capture local variations. National averages often obscure critical subnational disparities, where water stress varies within countries. The disaggregation of water stress can reveal hidden vulnerabilities and provide the foundation for targeted interventions.

Tackling water stress requires a shift towards smarter water management. Enhancing water-use efficiency in agriculture—through strategic investments and policy measures—will be crucial for sustaining food production while mitigating water scarcity.

Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/d34f3bc9-7c4d-46be-888e-144947550842/content

Storyline authors(s)/contributor(s): Patricia Mejias, FAO; Riccardo Biancalani, FAO

Custodian agency(ies): FAO

Target 6.5 By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate

Indicator 6.5.1 Degree of integrated water resources management

At the current rate, the world will not achieve sustainable water management until at least 2049

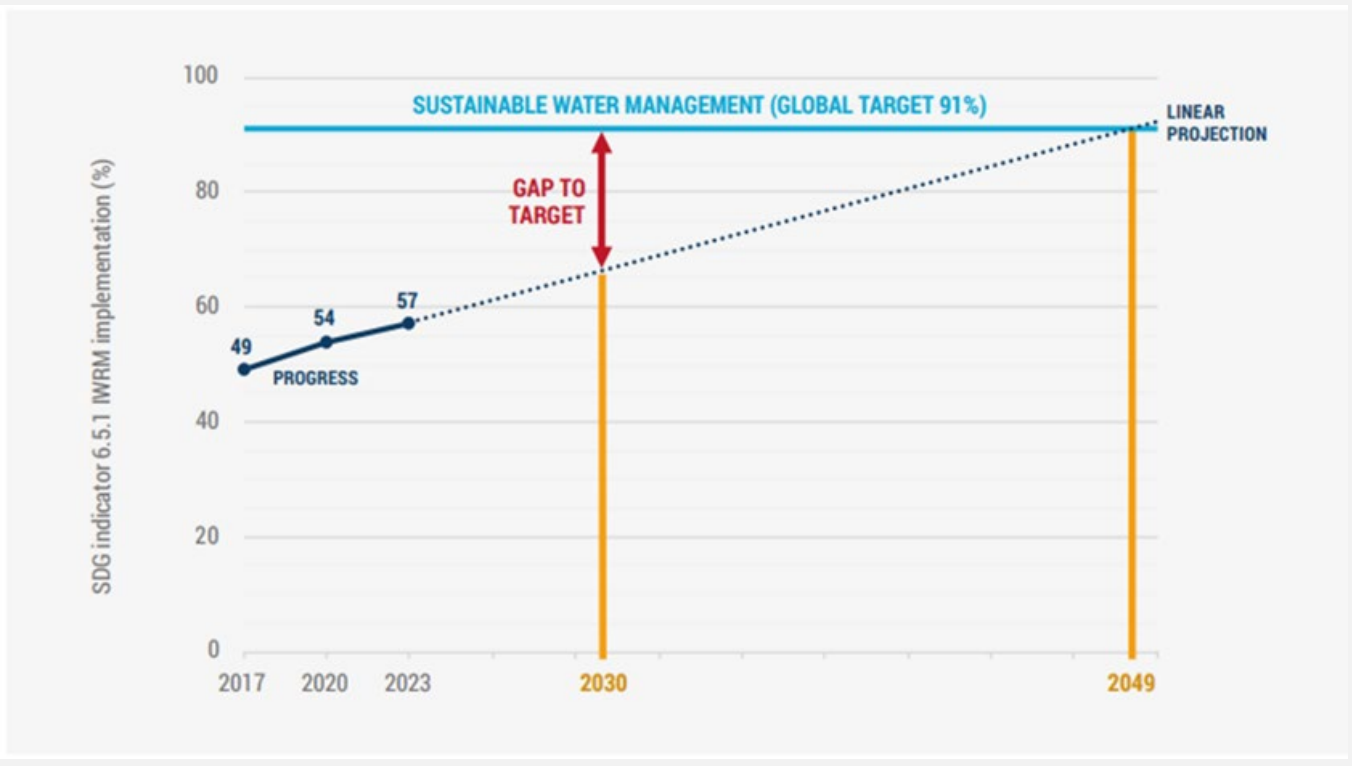
Global progress in implementing integrated water resources management remains slow – the level of implementation was 49 per cent in 2017, 54 per cent in 2020 and 57 per cent in 2023. While 47 countries (26 per cent) are close to, or have reached, the target of 'very high' IWRM implementation, the populations and economies of 73 countries (40 per cent) are being left behind. Sixty-three countries (34 per cent) face a similar, though less acute situation ('medium-high' IWRM implementation).

The SDG indicator 6.5.1 survey and consultations for reporting on progress strongly support inclusive and evidence-based decision making, and implementing IWRM supports multiple sustainable development goals, including Goal 3 (Good health and well-being), Goal 5 (Gender equality), Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth), Goal 14 (Life below water) and Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

The 2024 Global Report and SDG 6.5.1 data indicate that:

- **Insufficient finance constrains the implementation of integrated water resources management, limiting institutional capacity, monitoring networks, and the application of management instruments. More effective revenue raising for water management and infrastructure is needed in 85 per cent of countries.** 60 per cent of countries report not having effective revenue-raising for sustainable water management, while approximately 70 per cent of countries report not having sufficient funding to cover most of their needs for sustainable water management at sub-national, basin or aquifer level.
- **Using IWRM approaches – cross-sector, participatory management at the basin scale – in climate change adaptation efforts, presents a great opportunity to build resilience to climate change impacts.** While most countries appreciate the strong links between water and climate, there is significant untapped potential for strengthened links between climate change adaptation, mitigation and IWRM action. This is particularly the case in the areas of: (1) coordination between water and climate authorities, (2) policy and action planning, (3) human and institutional capacity, and (4) financing. Taking an IWRM approach boosts resilience across all relevant sectors and to rising pressures such as pollution, destruction of ecosystems, and loss of biodiversity.
- **Political commitments at the global level for sustainable water management have never been higher, but they have not been matched by the required finance or action on the ground. Recognizing IWRM approaches as being relevant to achieving other development objectives, including energy and food security, is critical to accelerating progress on sustainable development.** While only 50 per cent of countries report having formal cross-sector coordination arrangements in place, almost all countries report that effective coordination remains a challenge and a process of continual improvement.
- **Gender mainstreaming in water resources management (WRM) is essential for achieving both gender equality (SDG 5) and sustainable water management (SDG 6). However global progress is uneven, slow, and off track.** Global average scores on gender mainstreaming in WRM show a slight increase from 54 per cent in 2020 to 58 per cent in 2023. Despite this progress, in 2023 around 15 per cent of countries still had no gender mainstreaming mechanisms in WRM, and 31 per cent of countries had limited implementation, budget or monitoring of their gender mainstreaming mechanisms.

Global progress on SDG 6.5.1 on IWRM implementation



Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- IWRM Data Portal: https://iwrmdataportal.unepdhi.org/publications/global-reports
- Country reports and 2 page summary: https://iwrmdataportal.unepdhi.org/country-reports
- Global Report, including Executive Summary (https://iwrmdataportal.unepdhi.org/IWRMCMSDataJsonServiceTest/api/ResourceLibraryPublication/getSubReportFileById/36) and Visual Summary (https://iwrmdataportal.unepdhi.org/IWRMCMSDataJsonServiceTest/api/ResourceLibraryPublication/getSubReportFileById/39)

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Custodian agency(ies): UNEP

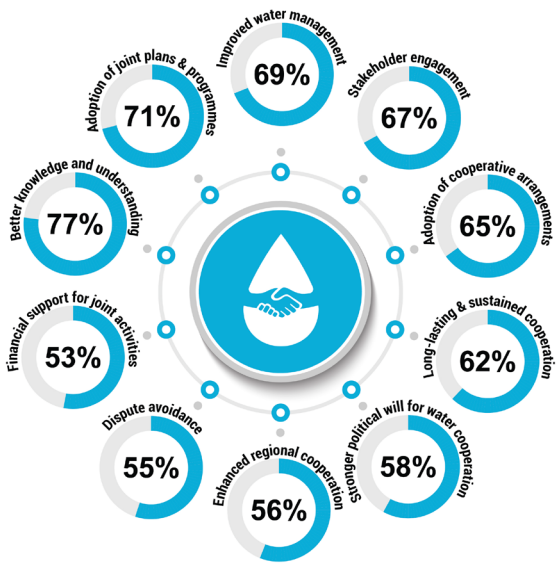
Indicator 6.5.2 Proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation

Countries with a long tradition of sharing transboundary rivers, lakes and aquifers demonstrate the multiple benefits that accrue from such cooperation, but more effort is needed to ensure that all countries can realise the benefits that transboundary water cooperation has to offer

A long history of countries cooperating over transboundary rivers, lakes and aquifers has delivered numerous benefits, such as advancing sustainable development, protecting ecosystems and biodiversity, and enhancing resilience to climate change and extreme events, such as floods and droughts. For example, over 50 years cooperation concerning the Senegal River (shared by Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, and Senegal) has helped tackle drought, improve reliable water supplies, provided affordable energy, and increased irrigable lands. More recently, this cooperation has extended to transboundary groundwaters through the adoption of cooperative arrangements for the Senegalo-Mauritanian Aquifer Basin. Through the Itaipu binational Commission, Brazil and Paraguay have also demonstrated the benefits of cooperation over the Parana River for more than 50 years. In 2020-21, the resilience of this cooperation was evident through the 'Water Windows' operation where, in the face of an extreme drought event, the countries were still able to equitably balance the needs of multiple water uses within the river basin. In some instances, cooperation over extreme events, such as floods and droughts, dates back many decades, and it is encouraging that coordinated or joint alarm systems for floods are implemented in 50% of transboundary river and lake basins. While these positive signs of cooperation help build resilience to climate change more needs to be done - only 14% of transboundary river and lake basins have adopted joint disaster risk reduction strategies, and only 15% of basins have adopted joint climate change adaptation strategies.

Ultimately, not enough countries are realizing the benefits that transboundary water cooperation has to offer for progressing sustainable development and responding to climate change. Out of 153 UN Members States that share transboundary basins, only 43 have operational arrangements in place for more than 90% of their territory situated in these basins, and over 20 countries lack any such arrangements. Regional disparities are also evident. While more efforts are needed in certain rivers, lakes and aquifers, North America, Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa have relatively high levels of cooperation – with 39 out of 84 countries sharing transboundary waters having 90% or more of their transboundary waters covered by operational arrangements. However, in Asia, only two countries out of 25 countries sharing transboundary waters have 90% or more of their transboundary basin area covered by cooperative arrangements. Examples, such as the 1995 Mekong Agreement and Mekong River Commission demonstrate how cooperation can yield benefits for countries. Recent agreements between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan on the Kempirabad (Andijan) Reservoir, and on water management issues, demonstrate encouraging signs of progress in countries adopting cooperative arrangements where they are lacking. In Latin America, as the Parana case illustrates, there are also clear examples of countries benefiting from cooperation over transboundary waters. However, only one country in Latin America has more than 90% of their transboundary basin area covered by operational arrangements.

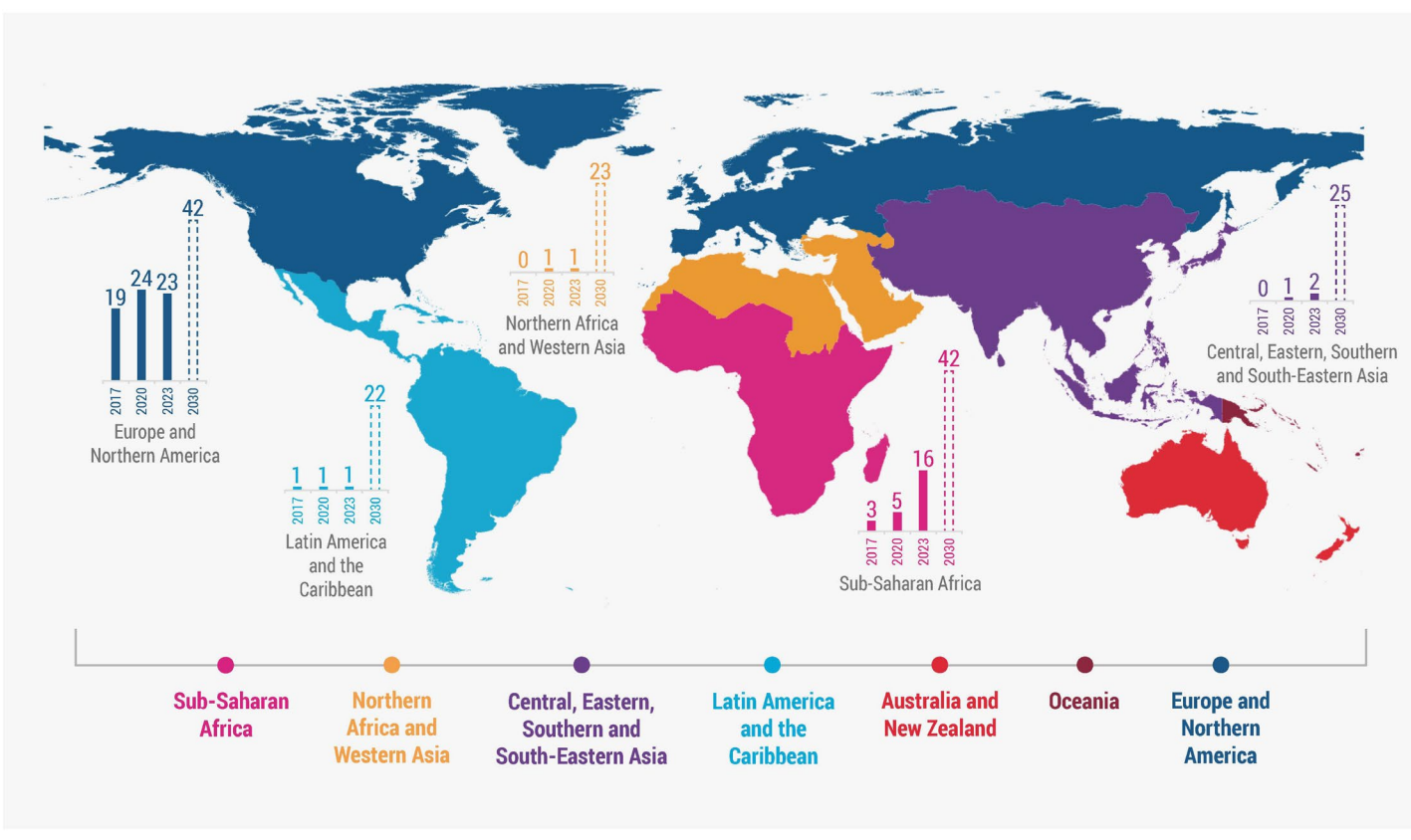
What do countries identify as being the main achievements gained from transboundary water cooperation?



Note: Percentages based on countries' responses selecting specific achievements in the questionnaire on SDG indicator 6.5.2 during the third reporting exercise (2023/2024).

Significant progress is therefore needed to ensure that all the world's transboundary rivers, lakes and aquifers are covered by operational arrangements for water cooperation by 2030. Deepening knowledge and understanding of transboundary waters and their benefits, increasing political will, securing funding and financing (including climate finance), capacity building, and capitalizing on, and where relevant acceding to, the global legal frameworks for water cooperation (the 1992 Water Convention and the 1997 Watercourses Convention) offer important means by which to accelerate progress in the adoption of operational arrangements for transboundary water cooperation.

Number of countries in each SDG region with the indicator 6.5.2 value between 90-100 per cent and progress needed to have all transboundary waters in each region covered by operational arrangements in 2030



Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- UN-Water SDG6 monitoring: https://www.sdg6monitoring.org/indicator-652
- UNECE SDG indicator 6.5.2 webpage: https://www.unece.org/water/transboundary_water_cooperation_reporting.html
- Press release 3rd Progress report on SDG 6.5.2: https://unece.org/media/press/395038
- UNESCO SDG indicator 6.5.2 webpage: https://www.unesco.org/en/ihp/transboundary-water-cooperation-reporting
- Press release 3rd Progress report on SDG 6.5.2: https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/global-lag-water-cooperation-undermines-resilience-worsening-floods-and-droughts-unesco-unece-report

Storyline authors(s)/contributor(s): Sonja Koeppel, UNECE ; Alistair Rieu-Clarke, UNECE ; Sarah Tiefenauer-Linardon, UNECE ; Iulia Trombitcaia, UNECE ; Aurélien Dumont, UNESCO ; Tatiana Dmitrieva, UNESCO

Custodian agency(ies): UNESCO-IHP, UNECE

Target 6.6 By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes

Indicator 6.6.1 Change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time

Data driven decision making for ecosystem protection

As countries strive to meet the ambitious targets of the 2030 Agenda, access to accurate, real-time data is crucial for informed decision-making. The SDG Indicator 6.6.1 data, hosted on the UNEP Freshwater Ecosystems Explorer, serves as a critical, science-driven tool designed to help nations monitor freshwater ecosystem changes, assess degradation, and identify priority areas for restoration and protection. The SDG Indicator 6.6.1 data provides dynamic, high-resolution information that enables countries to track changes in lakes, rivers, and wetlands. By leveraging satellite Earth observation (EO) data and hydrological modelling, the platform offers precise insights into water quality, quantity, and ecosystem health, allowing policymakers to make evidence-based interventions. With over 185 countries reporting on SDG 6.6.1, the data integrates real-time information to illustrate the state of water-related ecosystems.

Understanding which ecosystems require urgent intervention is the first step towards sustainable water management. The SDG Indicator 6.6.1 data categorizes ecosystems based on degradation levels, using a statistical classification of the data to highlight which freshwater sub-indiactors are in a degraded state. This enables governments to prioritize restoration projects, develop integrated water management strategies, and enforce policies to curb further degradation. Freshwater degradation impacts biodiversity, food security, and livelihoods, with 83% of freshwater species populations declining since 1970 and 25% of global freshwater fish species at risk of extinction. The SDG661 data provides insights into how ecosystem changes affect local communities, supporting targeted policies that ensure long-term sustainability

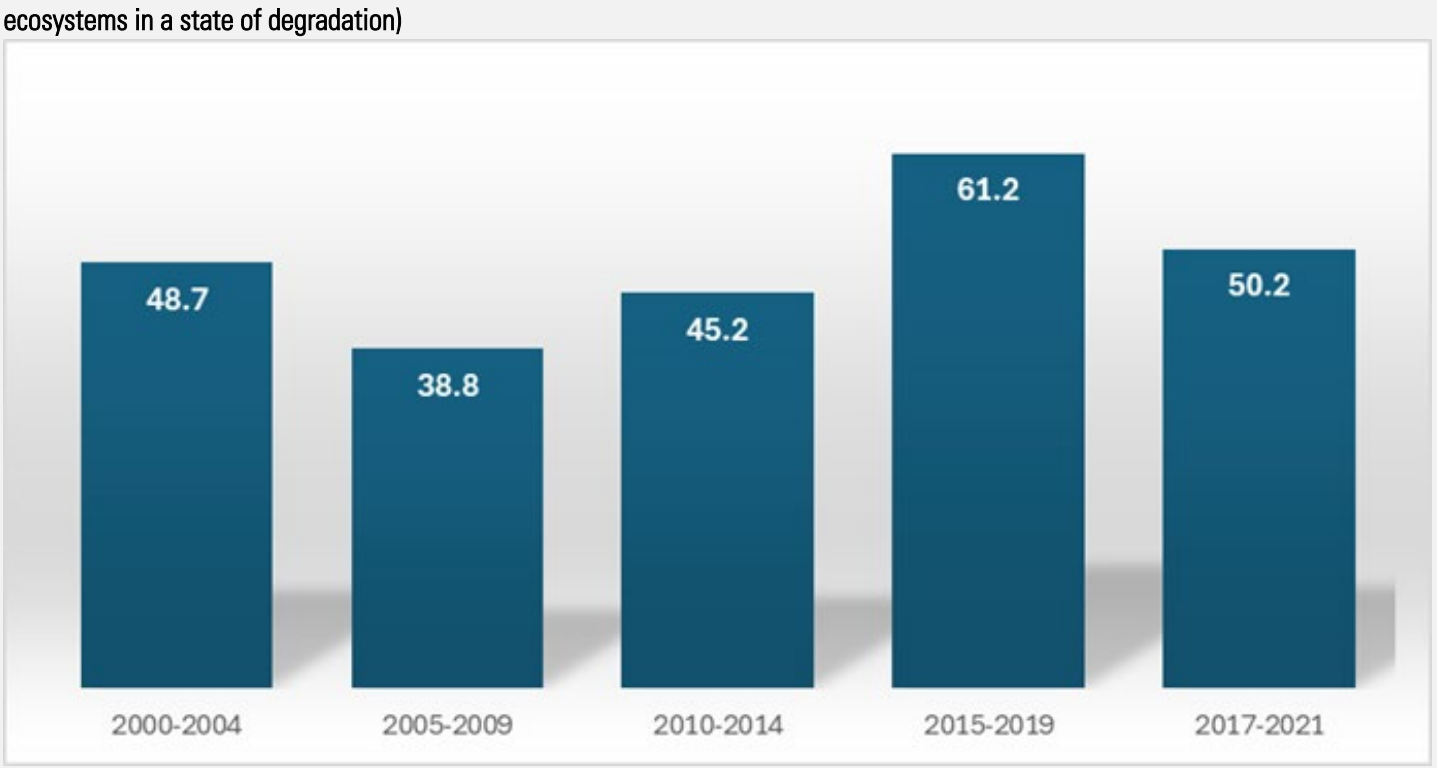
A significant contributions of the SDG Indicator 6.6.1 data is its role in bridging scientific research and policy action. Governments, researchers, and environmental organizations can rely on its robust, internationally comparable data to formulate policies grounded in accurate and consistent data. Additionally, the data supports the implementation of global initiatives like the Freshwater Challenge, aiming to restore 300,000 km of degraded rivers and 350 million hectares of wetlands. By making SDG 6.6.1 data more accessible and actionable, the data platform is aiming to foster cross-sector collaboration and promotes transparency in water management. Its ability to monitor hydrological trends across different regions empowers countries to take early action in mitigating water crises and safeguarding water resources for future generations. In this regard, investing in digital monitoring tools, strengthening regulatory frameworks, and enhancing capacity-building initiatives will accelerate progress towards SDG 6.6 and broader environmental goals. By leveraging the values of satellite derived data on assessing changes to water around the world, countries can transition from reactive to proactive water management, ensuring that their freshwater ecosystems remain resilient, biodiverse, and capable of supporting human and ecological well-being for generations to come.

The analysis of SDG Indicator 6.6.1 data reveals significant regional disparities in the status of freshwater ecosystems. Central Asia, South-Eastern Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa are currently the most affected regions, with over 60% of countries in these areas reporting one or more degraded freshwater ecosystem types. In contrast, regions such as Northern America and Europe, Australia and New Zealand, and Oceania show lower levels of degradation, with 39%, 28%, and 21% of countries affected, respectively. Notably, Oceania is the only region that has demonstrated a positive trend since 2000, with fewer countries reporting degraded ecosystems. These regional differences highlight the varying environmental and developmental challenges faced across the globe, emphasizing the need for tailored, region-specific solutions to address freshwater ecosystem degradation effectively.

The regional breakdown of river flow and surface water trends further underscores the uneven impact of freshwater ecosystem degradation. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the number of countries with degraded ecosystems has increased by 30% since 2000, reflecting a concerning trend of ecosystem decline. Meanwhile, regions like Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as Western Asia and Northern Africa, have over half of their countries reporting degraded freshwater ecosystems. The loss of permanent surface water is particularly pronounced in 364 river basins globally, with an estimated 93.1 million people affected. This loss is driven by a combination of human activities, such as unsustainable water use and land conversion, as well as climate change-induced droughts. These regional trends highlight the urgent need for integrated water resource management and transboundary cooperation to mitigate the impacts of freshwater ecosystem degradation and ensure sustainable water availability for future generations.

Nationally-produced data stemming from national wetland inventories for indicator 6.6.1 are only available for about a third of the 185 countries, confirming the need for a National wetland inventories support mechanism. Such mechanism will strengthen national reporting and the use of data in national monitoring and assessment, as well as planning. The Convention on Wetland's support mechanism provides a means to enhance capacities and knowledge development processes at national level and will promote the application of global datasets such as UNEP Freshwater Ecosystems Explorer by individual countries.

Global trend towards degradation of one or more types of water-related ecosystems (percentage of countries with one or more ecosystems in a state of degradation)



Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/46107
- https://www.unep.org/resources/report/mid-term-status-sdg-6-indicators-632-651-661-2024
- https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/half-worlds-countries-have-degraded-freshwater-systems-un-finds#:~:text=Nairobi%2C%2028%20August%202024%20%E2%80%93%20In,water%20management%20is%20off-track

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Custodian agency(ies): UNEP, Ramsar

Target 6.a By 2030, expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water- and sanitation-related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse technologies

Indicator 6.a.1 Amount of water- and sanitation-related official development assistance that is part of a government-coordinated spending plan

Official development assistance for the water sector remains stable overall, with slight decrease in disbursements since 2022

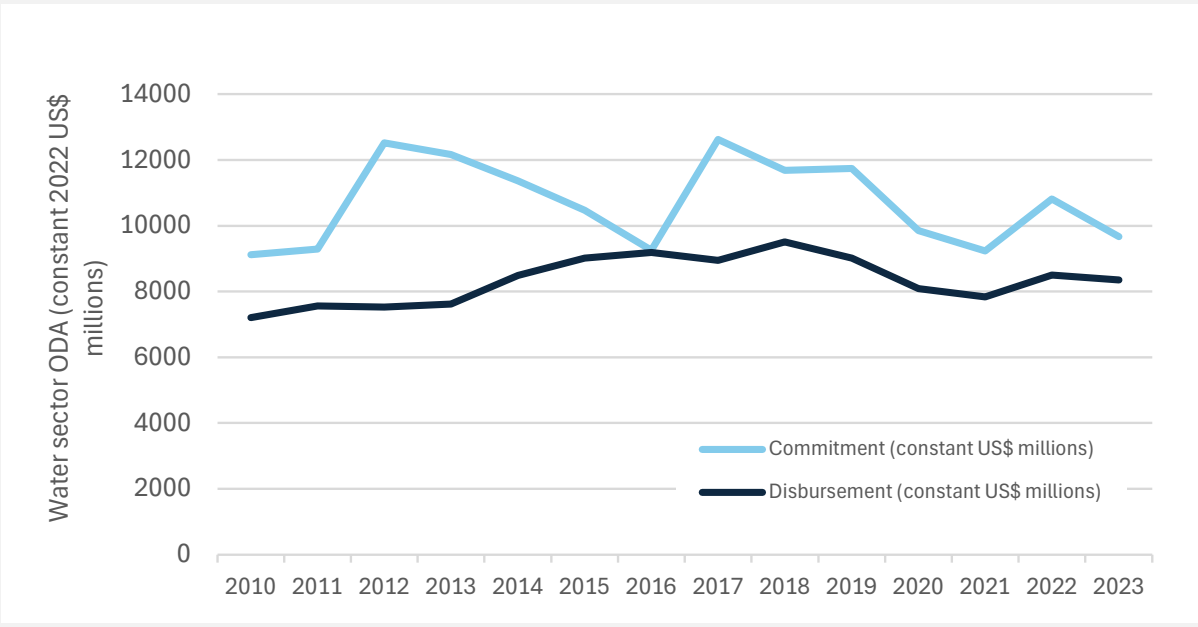
Official development assistance (ODA) disbursements to the water sector declined slightly from 8.5 billion USD in 2022 to 8.4 billion in 2023 USD, however remained higher than disbursements in 2020 and 2021 which had the lowest levels since the start of the SDGs in 2015. ODA commitments to the water sector decreased more substantially from 10.8 billion USD in 2022 to 9.7 billion USD in 2023.

Regional trends remain stable: Sub-Saharan Africa continues to receive the largest proportion of ODA disbursements at 31%, followed by Western Asia and Northern Africa (18%) and Central Asia and Southern Asia (18%). The region that saw the largest relative change was the Northern America and Europe region where ODA disbursements increased to 314 million USD in 2023 from 130 million in 2022.

Donor alignment with recipient country national plans remains low. In 2024, 29% of countries reported low alignment between donor funding and national water sector plans, while 30% of countries reported high alignment. These percentages have remained unchanged since 2021 when 32% of countries reported low alignment and 29% of countries reported high alignment. Low income countries were more likely to report low alignment (41%) compared to lower-middle (27%) and upper-middle (25%) income countries.

There has been little change in the top donors to the water sector since 2015, with the International Development Association, Japan, Germany, and European Union institutions constituting the top four donors in 2015 as well as in 2023, constituting 60% of ODA disbursements to the sector in 2023. However, since 2024 multiple donors have announced broad cuts to ODA; a less favorable aid environment is likely to have impacts on ODA for the water sector in the coming years. While it is not yet possible to quantify the impacts, seven of the bilateral donors announcing cuts to aid collectively contributed 2.3 billion USD or 22% of ODA to the water sector in 2023. It is expected that the effects on water sector ODA will start to be visible in the next reporting cycle.

Total ODA for water sector, 2010-2023



Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- OECD: https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/official-development-assistance-oda.html
- WHO: https://glaas.who.int/

Storyline authors(s)/contributor(s): WHO, OECD

Custodian agency(ies): WHO, OECD

Target 6.b Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management

Indicator 6.b.1 Proportion of local administrative units with established and operational policies and procedures for participation of local communities in water and sanitation management

Most countries have defined procedures for participation but have low levels of participation

Strengthening community participation is fundamental to adapt and sustain solutions for water and sanitation management to local contexts and to ensure no one is left behind. In practice, countries report varying levels of community and user participation. Communities with low levels of participation receive information from decision-makers with limited opportunities to influence decisions. In contrast, communities with high levels of participation have regular opportunities to take part in planning processes and may even have formal representation in government processes for joint decision-making on issues surrounding water, sanitation and water resources management.

Since 2016, the percentage of countries having defined procedures for local community participation in law or policy has remained high (over 80%) for both rural drinking-water and for water resources management. However, the percentage of countries reporting high levels of participation has remained consistently low (around 40%) since 2018.

In 2024, 92% of countries reported having defined procedures for local community participation in law or policy for rural drinking-water. However, only 41% of countries reported having high levels of community participation for rural drinking-water.

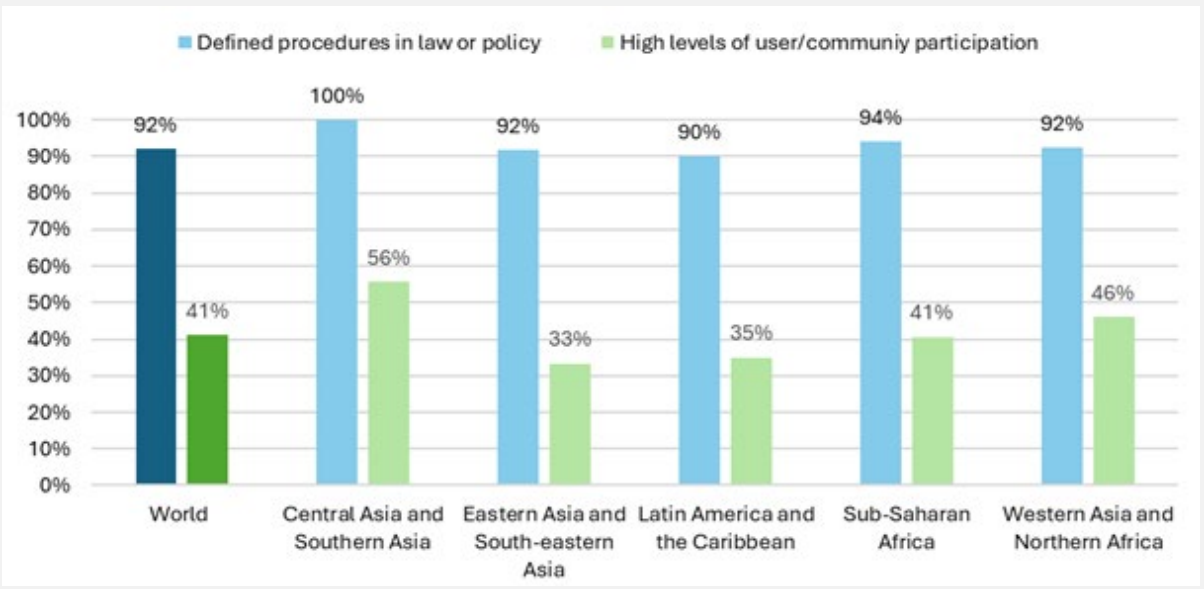
Regionally, more than 92% of countries in Central Asia and Southern Asia and in Sub-Saharan Africa reported having defined participation procedures in law or policy for rural drinking-water. The percentage of countries reporting high levels of community participation was highest in Central Asia and Southern Asia (56%).

Similar results were found for water resources management. In 2024, 88% of countries reported having defined procedures for local community participation in law or policy for water resources management. However, only 29% of countries reported having high levels of community participation in water resources management.

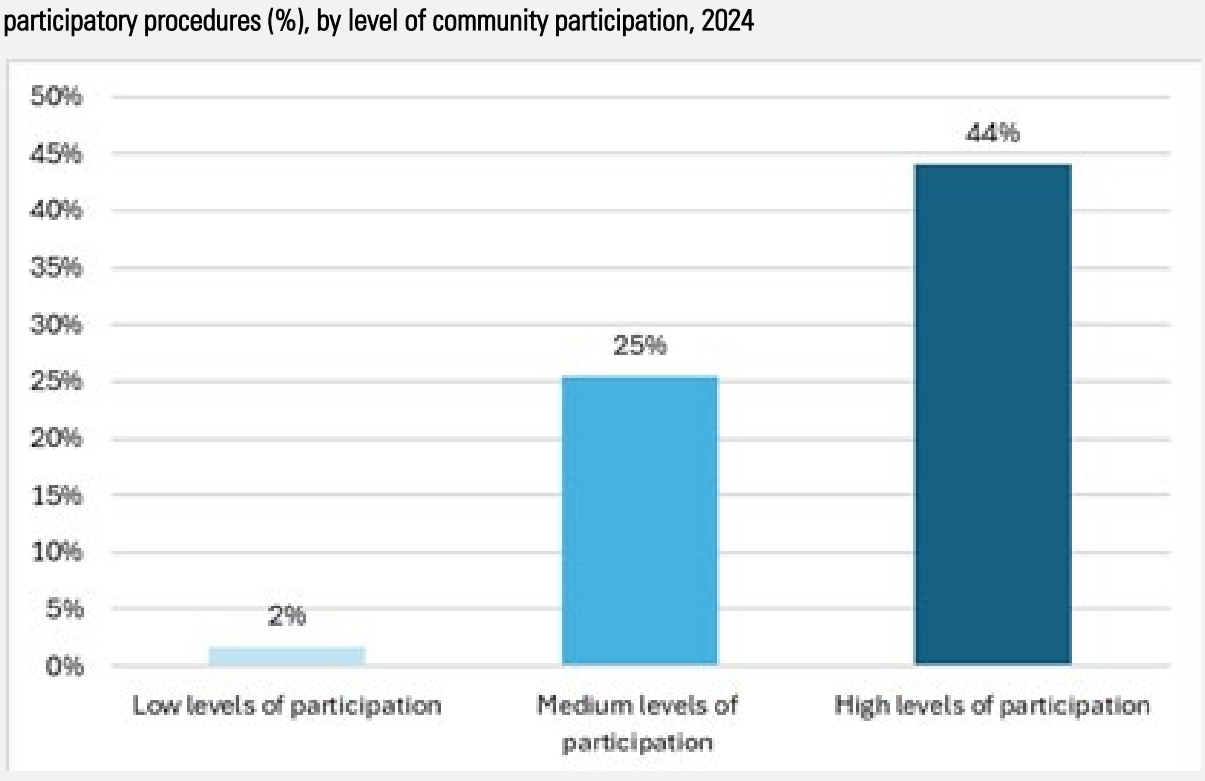
Regionally, more than 90% of countries in Eastern Asia and South-easter Asia, Western Asia and Northern Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa reported having defined procedures for local community participation in law or policy for water resources management. Levels of community participation were highest in Western Asia and Northern Africa where 47% of countries reported having high levels of community participation in water resources management.

Participation of users and communities is constrained by a lack of financial and human resources. Only 9% of countries reported having sufficient (over 74% of the) financial resources needed to support the participation of users and communities for rural drinking-water; and only 11% for water resources management. Similarly, only 13% of countries reported having sufficient human resources to support the participation for rural drinking-water; and only 14% for water resources management. In contrast, countries supported by a designated agency or institution responsible for participatory procedures were more likely to report high levels of participation. Forty-four percent of countries reported having a responsible agency or institution and high levels of participation in rural sanitation and drinking-water, as compared to countries with low levels of participation where only 2% reported having a responsible agency or institution.

Percent of countries that define participation procedures for rural drinking-water in law or policy and have high levels of participation (%), by region (2024)



Per cent of countries with agencies or institutions responsible for rural sanitation and drinking-water participatory procedures (%), by level of community participation, 2024



Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- GLAAS data portal: https://glaas.who.int/

Storyline authors(s)/contributor(s): WHO

Custodian agency(ies): WHO, OECD