

**Statement by  
David Cooper  
Acting Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity  
World Water Day  
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Our lives depend on water, and water depends on biodiversity. Rivers, lakes, and wetlands, as well as forests, mountains and other ecosystems, perform vital functions and services. They are an integral part of the global water cycle which, among other things, ensures that groundwater is available to the estimated 1.5 to 3 billion people that depend on it.

All these ecosystems underpin the water supply and water quality, and guard against water-related hazards and disasters. However, they are currently among the most threatened ecosystems in the world, suffering the impacts of land-use change, over-exploitation, pollution, and other threats.

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, adopted last December, aims to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity, sustain water-related ecosystem services, and support SDG6 and the other Sustainable Development Goals. All the Framework's goals and targets are relevant to water. Achieving these targets will tackle the drivers of biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation. It will facilitate access to clean drinking water, support food security and human health, and help to control flooding and the impacts of extreme events.

This is the work of everyone; governments, productive sectors, businesses, indigenous peoples and local communities and individuals need to work together in a multisectoral approach.

We all need water and we all need to conserve it and change the way we manage it. We can no longer sit by and just see the need for change. It is time to step up, take action, and be the change. And so, this year, as we observe World Water Day, and the start of the first UN Water Conference since 1977, I challenge all stakeholders to take the actions needed to achieve the targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework. Governments can accelerate implementation through coherent policies. Businesses can adopt sustainable practices and wise water use. The agricultural sector can adopt sustainable practices to increase productivity while reducing pollution and water use and conserving biodiversity. Every stakeholder can play their part. Together, we can build a future where we all live in harmony with nature.

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