Water and climate change

World Water Day 2020, on 22 March, is about water and climate change – and how the two are inextricably linked.

Adapting to the water effects of climate change will protect health and save lives.

Using water more efficiently will reduce greenhouse gases.

We cannot afford to wait.Everyone has a role to play.

**Water and climate change: what do we mean?**

What do we mean when we say: ‘We cannot afford to wait. Climate policy makers must put water at the heart of action plans’?

Climate delay is almost as dangerous as climate denial. Every country in the world must work more quickly.

Extreme weather events are making water more scarce, more unpredictable, more polluted or all three.

Humans need water to survive, as do all the systems we rely on: sanitation, healthcare, education, business and industry.

Action plans to tackle climate change need to be integrated across different sectors and coordinated across borders. And they must have one thing in common: safe and sustainable water management.

Learn more in the [UN-Water Policy Brief on Climate Change and Water](https://www.unwater.org/publications/un-water-policy-brief-on-climate-change-and-water/).

What do we mean when we say: ‘Water can help fight climate change. There are sustainable, affordable and scalable water and sanitation solutions’?

Fighting climate change will open up vast opportunities for the economy in many areas. We need to embrace circular production systems and use water much more efficiently.

As the global population grows, so does the demand for water, which depletes natural resources and damages the environment in many places. Solutions include protecting carbon sinks such as oceans and wetlands, adopting climate-smart agricultural techniques, and increasing the safe reuse of wastewater.

Water is our most precious resource – we must use it more responsibly. We must balance all of society’s water needs while ensuring the poorest people don’t get left behind

What do we mean when we say: ‘Everyone has a role to play. It is surprising how many water actions anyone, anywhere can take to address climate change.’?

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres said: “Warnings are necessary. But fear will not get the job done.”

Yes, climate change can feel scary and daunting. But there is one simple step you can take immediately that will make a big difference: don’t waste water.

Thousands of people are logging their climate actions on the [United Nation’s ActNow website](https://www.un.org/en/actnow/). Check out all the easy lifestyle changes that will help save the planet.

<https://www.worldwaterday.org/2020-home/learn/>