



## CALL FOR ACTION

### WORLD FOOD DAY 2023

**"Water is Life, Water is Food. Leave No One Behind"**

The World Food Day is celebrated on October 16, which marks the creation of FAO in 1945.. The World Food Day promotes awareness of hunger and action for the future of food, people, and the planet. The World Food Day 2023 focus on the theme " 'Water is Life, Water is Food. Leave No One Behind'. The theme aims to highlight the critical role of water for life on earth and water as the foundation of our food. It also seeks to raise global awareness about the importance of managing water wisely as rapid population growth, economic development, urbanization, and climate change threaten water availability. World Food Day promote worldwide awareness and action because water is a driving force for people, economies and nature and the foundation of our food. Water is essential to life on Earth, but fresh water is not infinite and there is a need to make sure that no one is left behind in access water .On the occasion of this World Food Day, FIMARC is calling along with FAO on countries and other stakeholders to implement concrete initiatives to manage water resources so that populations have right to water to maintain their life and livelihood.

#### **Importance of the theme**

**Water is life, water is food. Leave no one behind.**

Water is essential to life on Earth. It makes up over 50% of our bodies and covers about 71% of the Earth's surface. Only 2.5% of water is fresh, suitable for drinking, agriculture, and most industrial uses. Water is a driving force for people, economies and nature and the foundation of our food. Indeed, agriculture accounts for 72% of global freshwater withdrawals, but like all natural resources, fresh water is not infinite. Rapid population growth, urbanization, economic development, and climate change are putting the planet's water resources under increasing stress. At the same time, freshwater resources per person have declined 20% in the past decades and water availability and quality are deteriorating fast due to decades of poor use and management, over extraction of groundwater, pollution and climate change. We risk stretching this precious resource to a point of no return.

Today, 2.4 billion people live in water-stressed countries. Many are smallholder farmers who already struggle to meet their daily needs, particularly women, Indigenous Peoples, migrants, and refugees. Competition for this priceless resource is increasing as water scarcity becomes an ever-increasing cause of conflict. Around 600 million people who depend, at least partially, on aquatic food systems for a living are suffering the effects of pollution, ecosystem degradation, unsustainable practices and climate change.

We need to produce more food and other essential agricultural commodities with less water, while ensuring water is distributed equally, our aquatic food systems are preserved, and nobody is left behind. Governments need to design science and evidence-based policies that capitalize on data, innovation and cross-sectoral coordination to better plan and manage water. They need to support these policies with increased investment, legislation, technologies and capacity development, while incentivizing farmers and the private sector to engage in integrated solutions for a more efficient use of water, and for its conservation.

We all need to stop taking water for granted and start improving the way we use it in our daily lives. What we eat, and how that food is produced all affect water. We can make a difference by choosing local, seasonal, and fresh foods, wasting less of it - even by reducing food waste, and finding safe ways to reuse it while preventing water pollution. Together, we can take action in favor of water for the future of food, people and the planet.

### **Water as a livelihood**

From oceans to lakes, rivers and estuaries, water bodies are home to flourishing ecosystems, hosting important habitats and a surprising wealth of biodiversity. Over 600 million people depend on aquatic food systems for a living including small-scale fishers, fish farmers, fish processors, as well as their dependents. They are the backbone of coastal and inland communities, supporting local economies and influencing cultures worldwide.

Currently, we exploit almost 3 000 species in capture fisheries, and we cultivate over 650 of these species. The diversity of aquatic food systems makes them a unique and essential source of nutrition and food security. Aquatic foods are increasingly recognized for their potential to combat malnutrition, due to rich essential nutrients such as omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, and minerals that are vital for human health.

Preserving and safeguarding these aquatic ecosystems and the species they support is not just a responsibility, but a necessity for the well-being of our planet and its inhabitants.

There are few places on Earth where water is more accessible in adequate amounts to meet the needs of people. The availability, absence, or scarcity of water has marked the whole history of humankind, and it continues to be one of the most pressing concerns that people must confront today. As the world's population is expected to reach over 9 billion by 2050, it has never been more necessary to feed the world's growing population healthily, equitably and sustainably. There are several water concerns that we, as a global community, face, such as water shortage, water pollution, and an uneven distribution of water resources.

To address today's water challenges, we must ensure effective water usage in agrifood systems, find safe ways to re-use wastewater, safeguard our waters and aquatic food systems, and provide affordable nutritious food for everyone in the face of climate change and increasing demand.

### **Understanding the challenges**

Rapid population growth, urbanization, economic development, and climate change have all taken a toll on our water resources. Paired with water pollution, overextraction and overall poor management, this creates a complex mix of challenges.

More than 80 percent of the world's wastewater today is released into the environment untreated and has never been reused.

The resulting water pollution is affecting all of us, including around 600 million people who engage in fisheries for a living.<sup>4</sup> Water challenges affect different people in different ways. Particularly in water-stressed areas, even the smallest change can have a major impact on people's lives. Those hardest hit by water scarcity are oftentimes small-scale producers in lower-income countries who already struggle to meet their daily needs for water, food and basic services. This is particularly true for women and girls, Indigenous Peoples, migrants and refugees.

Poor water governance often creates conflict. Different groups may be using one water source peacefully for a long time, but as that water becomes less abundant, farmers, forest-dependent people, herders and others may find themselves at odds over who has the right to use it and to what extent. This poses challenges for local water governance systems and for national legal frameworks that don't always recognize traditional rights over these water resources and grasp the changing needs

On top of that, extreme weather events are increasing -and most involve water. Around 74 percent of all disasters from 2001 to 2018 were water related, causing economic damage of nearly USD 700 billion.<sup>5</sup> Flood-related disasters have more than doubled since 2000, and the number and duration of droughts increased by almost a third. The threats that too little or too much water pose to our food security, ecosystems and well-being should be clear to all of us. So should the urgency to act to ensure a water-secure future for all. Each challenge is connected, and we must face them together.

New solutions to water shortage and security must be found through science and innovation while also harnessing traditional knowledge. Partnerships and cooperation are also vital to guarantee access to safe water and, by extension, food security. Everyone has a role to play. Water connects us; it is our shared history, present, and future. We believe that access to clean water is not only essential for survival but also plays a vital role in ensuring food security for all.

## FAST FACTS

- ✚ . 95% of our food is produced on land and all begins with soil and water
- ✚ Agriculture accounts for 72% of global freshwater withdrawals. Another 16% goes to municipalities for households and services, and 12% is used by industries.
- ✚ 2.4 billion people live in water-stressed countries. Some 10% of the global population live in countries with high and critical water stress.
- ✚ Over 80% of the world's wastewater is released into the environment without being treated.
- ✚ Global water demand for agriculture is expected to increase 35% by 2050.
- ✚ Around 3/4 of all disasters from 2001 to 2018 were water-related. They caused nearly USD 700 billion in economic damage.
- ✚ Since 2000, flood-related disasters have increased by 134%. The number and duration of droughts increased by 29%.
- ✚ Wetlands - the most biologically diverse of all ecosystems - are disappearing three times faster than forests. Some 85% have been lost over the past 300 years.
- ✚ Limiting global warming to 1.5°C, compared to 2°C, will benefit water resources and reduce water stress induced by climate change
- ✚ At least 600 million people depend to some degree on aquatic food systems for a living. Aquatic food systems are crucial for nutrition and food security.
- ✚ 17% of food available to consumers worldwide is thrown away each year, wasting precious water used to produce it

## FIMARC CALLS TO ACTION

This World Food Day is an occasion to focus our attention for the realization of Zero Hunger World through healthy diets. Run up to the World Food day 2023, We would like to call upon all our member movements around the world to take up concrete actions in your movements in relation to the theme of the year. I thank all the movements that were involved in various actions last year.

Some proposals of actions in line with the theme of the World Food Day 2023 are mentioned below. But each movement can organise activities based on their own reality.

- ❖ Inform water and agriculture policies and advise decision-making processes.
- ❖ • Share knowledge, data and skills.
- ❖ • Campaign for change
- ❖ Find innovative ways to produce goods with less water.
- ❖ • Understand where your water comes from and where it goes.
- ❖ • Manage water more efficiently with a water audit
- ❖ • Cut down pollution in your activities. This includes reducing toxic chemicals and improving wastewater treatment and reuse
- ❖ Reduce the use of pesticides and fertilizers and dispose correctly
- ❖ Adopt sustainable and Agro Ecological practices that get more out of the water you use.
- ❖ Share water-gathering duties equally between men and women, boys and girls, so all have time for other activities
- ❖ Choose fresh and seasonal fruits and vegetables - they usually take less water to produce.
- ❖ • Reduce your food waste. It means less water goes to waste
- ❖ • Save water. This includes using less energy, since much of it is generated using water.
- ❖ • Shop sustainably. This includes eco-label fish but also fibres like cotton, which require less water and release fewer micro plastics into the environment than synthetic fabrics.
- ❖ • Don't pollute water, and take part in clean ups if you can.
- ❖ **Other actions**
  - *Organise Recreation and sports activities such as a run, a march, a walk or even a marathon to give awareness on Water issues.*

- *Organize conferences, debates and public round tables with political leaders, educators, scientists and farmers on sustainable water management and conservation*
- *Organise Corner meetings ,press conference , press release or demonstrations against water monopoly and exploitation by MNC;s*
- *Organise one day volunteer work to save money and to support hunger eradication projects in your own places or send to the FIMARC World Food Day fund to support other people who are in need around the world*
- *Make awareness raising activities and campaings on **Water Conservation***

During this world food day of 2023, FIMARC requests all its member movements to have deep reflections, actions on "Water is Life, Water is Food. Leave No One Behind" and to Lobby the governments for the same. We urge all the members to organise a common action day to raise awareness on this topic and send us the news about your activities.

Wish you all the best for your world food day actions of 2023

**The Bureau**

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ASSESE, 18 /09/2023

Reference -[www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org)

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