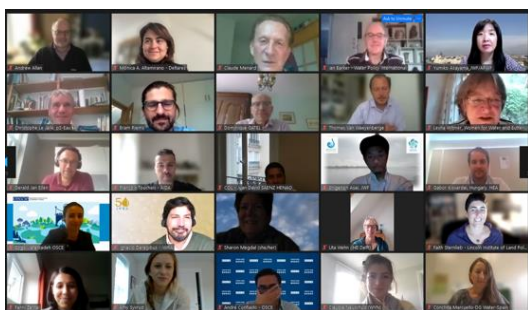


## 15<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE OECD WATER GOVERNANCE INITIATIVE

27–28 September 2021, Virtual Meeting

### HIGHLIGHTS



The [OECD Water Governance Initiative](#) is an international multi-stakeholder network of 100+ members from public, private and not-for-profit sectors gathering twice a year in a Policy Forum to share on-going policy reforms, projects, lessons and good practices in support of better governance in the water sector. Fifteen meetings have been held since its creation (27–28 March 2013, Paris, France; 7–8 November 2013, Paris, France; 28–29 April 2014, Madrid, Spain; 24–25 November 2014, Paris, France; 26 May 2015, Edinburgh, United Kingdom; 2–3 November 2015, Paris, France; 23–24 June 2016, The Hague, The Netherlands; 12–13 January, Rabat, Morocco; 3–4 July 2017, Paris, France; 20–21 November 2017, Vienna, Austria; 12–13 November 2018, Zaragoza, Spain; 20–21 June 2019, Berlin, Germany; 9–10 January 2020, Paris, France; 2–3 November 2020, On-line, 27–28 September 2021, On-line).

The OECD WGI aims to:

- Provide a **multi-stakeholder technical platform** to share knowledge, experience, and best practices on water governance across levels of government;
- **Advise governments** in taking the needed steps for effective water reforms through peer-to-peer dialogue and stakeholder engagement across public, private, and non-profit sectors;
- Provide a **consultation mechanism** to raise the profile of governance in the Global Water Agenda (Sustainable Development Goals, World Water Forum, Habitat III, COP, etc.);
- Support the **implementation** of the [OECD Principles on Water Governance](#) in interested member and non-member countries by promoting the uptake of the Water Governance Indicator Framework and peer-to-peer exchanges; and
- **Foster continuity** on governance discussions between two World Water Fora (every 3 years), currently between the 8<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum (Brazil, 2018) and the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum (Senegal, March 2022).

# Table of contents

Summary of Outcomes & Next Steps	3
Day 1: September 27, 2021	5
Welcoming Remarks	5
WGI Contribution to global agendas and COP26	6
Building a sustainable blue economy in cities	9
Day 1 Closing	14
Day 2: September 28, 2021	15
WGI Contribution to the 9 <sup>th</sup> World Water Forum (Dakar, March 2022)	15
Implementing the OECD principles on Water Governance: update	19
Closing of the 15 <sup>th</sup> WGI meeting	21
<b>FIGURES</b>	
Figure 1. In your experience, what should characterise a blue city? A word cloud.	12

## Summary of Outcomes & Next Steps

On 27–28 September 2021, the OECD Water Governance Initiative (WGI), held its 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting on-line. The meeting gathered 120+ practitioners, policymakers and representatives from major stakeholder groups (see the [agenda](#), [list of participants](#), [presentations](#), and the paper on [Tools, publications and events from the 14th to the 15th OECD WGI meeting](#)). The 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting had the following objectives:

- **Share knowledge and learn** from WGI members on the latest projects, publications, and events on water governance;
- Advance towards the **9th World Water Forum** agenda and COP26;
- Dive into water resilience at city-basin level, exploring opportunities linked to the **blue and circular economy** and **nature-based solutions**;
- Advance with the implementation of the OECD Principles on Water Governance, through **impact indicators** and the **Capacity Development Toolkit**.

**Peter Glas, Chair of the OECD Water Governance Initiative (WGI)** provided updates on developments since the 14<sup>th</sup> OECD WGI Meeting on 2–3 November 2020. In particular, he highlighted the outcome of the [OECD Water Days 2021](#) that took place on-line between the 22 and 26 March. On this occasion, three reports on water governance were launched: [Water Governance in African Cities](#), [Water Governance in Cape Town, South Africa](#), and [Water Governance in Peru](#). In addition, two policy papers were launched: [Water Governance in Asia Pacific](#), and [Financing Water Security for Sustainable Growth in Asia and the Pacific](#), produced as part of the [ADB 2020 edition of the Asian Water Development Outlook \(AWDO\)](#). Finally, the OECD Secretariat launched the [OECD Toolkit for Water Policies and Governance](#), which includes a compendium of good practices to support the implementation of the [OECD Council Recommendation on Water](#).

**The Chair** informed delegates of the end of the mandate of [Secretary-General Ángel Gurría](#), after fifteen years at the head of the organisation, and thanked him for his work, leadership and support of the water agenda. On 20 May 2021, a farewell ceremony attended by more than 80 water leaders was organised for Mr Gurría, who was handed over the brochure "[Fifteen Years of Water Wisdom, The OECD Water Legacy \(2006-2021\)](#)". Delegates were also informed that the new Secretary-General of the OECD, [Mathias Cormann](#), former Australian Minister for Finance, started his five-year term on 1 June 2021.

During the session on WGI contribution to global agendas and COP26, delegates shared information on their planned participation in international events and conferences with the objective to foster synergies across the members of the OECD WGI, in the presence of **Michael Mullan, Special Advisor for COP26, Environment Directorate, OECD** and **Cate Lamb, High-Level Climate Action Champions Lead – Water, UNFCCC COP26**.

The session entitled "Building a sustainable blue economy in cities" shared views and expertise on how cities can foster a blue economy that is Resilient, Inclusive, Sustainable and Circular (RISC-proof approach). **After a presentation of the [Cities for a Blue Economy Project](#)** by the Secretariat, several experts provided their views and reflections based on ongoing work, including **Eric Tardieu, International**

**Network of Basin Organisations (INBO) and Gustavo Saltiel, Global Lead for Water and Sanitation, World Bank.**

During the session dedicated to the preparation towards the [9th World Water Forum](#) (22–26 March 2022, Dakar, Senegal) **Abdoulaye Sene, Executive Director, 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum** provided the members with a first-hand update on the progress made towards the Forum and of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Forum’s timeline. **Khatim Kherraz, Director of Strategy and Programmes, World Water Council**, provided insights on the functioning of the organisation. The OECD Secretariat presented progress on the Pilot Group 4 on Means Tools And several WGI members completed the overview with their specific contributions, including Pierre-Alain Roche, Member of general Council for environment and sustainable development, **Ministry of Ecological Transition France**, Barbara Schreiner, Executive Director, **Water Integrity Network (WIN)**, Stefano Burchi, President, **International Association for Water Law (AIDA)**, and Abou Amani, Secretary of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme, **UNESCO**.

Finally, during the update in the Implementation of the [OECD Principles on Water Governance](#), the OECD Secretariat provided updates on the Capacity Development Toolkit, which includes lessons from using the Principles in the self-assessment process of three African countries (DRC, Mali and Nigeria) by **Waterpreneurs and ACF**. Lastly James Nickum, Editor in Chief, **International Water Resources Association (IWRA)**, presented the structure and timeline of the upcoming Water International Journal’s Special Issue entitled “[The OECD Principles on Water Governance as a means to an end: how to measure impacts of water governance?](#)”.

Next steps on the road to the 16<sup>th</sup> OECD WGI meeting:

- Advance WGI members’ activities towards the [9th World Water Forum](#) (22–26 March 2021, Dakar, Senegal);
- Finalise the OECD Toolkit for Capacity Development on the [OECD Principles on Water Governance](#), including a short video
- Complete and peer-review the Special Issue of Water International “[The OECD Principles on Water Governance as a means to an end: how to measure impacts of water governance?](#)”;
- Explore synergies and collaborations on the Cities for the Blue Economy Project and the OECD/UCLG Africa Roundtable of African Mayors for Water Security.

# Day 1: September 27, 2021

## Welcoming Remarks

**Peter Glas, Chair of the OECD Water Governance Initiative (WGI)**, thanked the OECD Secretariat, WGI members connected across time zones and the Steering Committee members. He acknowledged that the current COVID-19 crisis led to a virtual setting since the [14th OECD WGI meeting](#), and the 16<sup>th</sup> WGI meeting will be also held on-line. **Peter Glas** also wished luck to Japanese colleagues, especially those hit by typhoons at that time.

**The Chair** shared some updates regarding the events that took place since the [14th OECD WGI Meeting](#) on 2–3 November 2020. In particular, he highlighted the outcome of the [OECD Water Days 2021](#) that was held on-line between the 22<sup>nd</sup> and the 26<sup>th</sup> of March. On this occasion, three reports on water governance were launched: [Water governance in African Cities](#), [Water Governance in Cape Town, South Africa](#), and [Water Governance in Peru](#). In addition, two policy papers were launched: [Water Governance in Asia Pacific](#), and [Financing Water Security for Sustainable Growth in Asia and the Pacific](#), produced as part of the [ADB 2020 edition of the Asian Water Development Outlook \(AWDO\)](#). Finally, the OECD Secretariat launched the [OECD Toolkit for Water Policies and Governance](#), which includes a compendium of good practices to support the implementation of the [OECD Council Recommendation on Water](#).

**The Chair** informed the members that the former [Secretary-General \(SG\) Ángel Gurría](#) ended his mandate on Monday 31 May 2021 after fifteen years as Secretary General of the Organisation, and thanked him in particular for his hard work and commitment to raise the profile of water in national and global agendas. On 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021, 80+ stakeholders from the Water Community joined an on-line farewell ceremony for Angel Gurría to thank him for championing water as a driver for sustainable growth and development over the past 15 years. On that occasion, a 16-min [testimonial video](#) from 44 World Water Leaders was displayed and the Brochure "[Fifteen Years of Water Wisdom: the OECD Water Legacy \(2006-2021\)](#)" was released.

The new Secretary-General of the OECD, [Mathias Cormann](#), started his five-year term on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021. Prior to his appointment to the OECD, he served as the Australian Minister for Finance and the Leader of the Government in the Australian Senate. **The Chair** summarised the new SG' [priorities](#), namely:

- Help maximise the strength of the economic recovery in the wake of COVID-19;
- Drive and promote global leadership on ambitious and effective action on climate change to achieve global net-zero emissions by 2050;
- Finalise a multilateral approach to digital taxation; to seize the opportunities and better manage the risks in the digital economy; and
- Promote market-based policies and a rules-based international order; and
- Strengthen the engagement and outreach of the OECD into the Asia-Pacific.

**The Chair** finally welcomed and thanked the Steering Committee members for their work, presented the [agenda](#) to the [participants](#), and reminded them of the “confidential” nature of the draft documents provided to them prior to the meeting, namely: the OECD scoping note on the OECD Cities for a Blue Economy Project, the Terms of Reference for the Roundtable of African Mayors for Water Security, the Capacity Development Toolkit, and the Transcription of the Animation Video on Water Governance. He then introduced the speakers of the first session on OECD WGI contribution to the global agendas and particularly to [COP26](#).

## WGI Contribution to global agendas and COP26

**Michael Mullan, Special Advisor for COP26, OECD Environment Directorate**, started his presentation by sharing that the main takeaway from the 2021 [IPCC Report](#) is that climate change is becoming increasingly urgent and its impacts will be more severe over time. He argued that reaching the 1.5 degrees objective set out by the [Paris Agreement](#) requires ambitious mitigation efforts to stop overshooting beyond that threshold in the next ten years. As such, the COP26 has been planned with the following objectives:

- First, to finalise the “[Paris Rulebook](#)”, the implementation guidelines of the Paris Agreement. It is a set of rules adopted in 2015, laying out the tools and processes to enable the full, fair, and effective implementation of the [Paris Agreement](#), regarding voluntary international coordination and enhanced transparency;
- Second, to secure more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Only a few countries committed to reaching net-zero emissions so far, creating a gap between countries with near-term and those with long-term ambitions; and
- Third, to improve flows of climate finance as a key element to align all finance flows with the objectives of the Paris Agreement.. While in the 2021 OECD [assessment of progress](#) on climate finance, developed countries had promised to mobilise USD 100 billion a year by 2020, the latest figures available for 2019 showed that =USD 20 billion are missing.

**Michael Mullan** highlighted the role of water to contribute to the [UK Presidency campaigns themes](#) for COP26, namely to adaptation and resilience, nature-based solutions, and to a lesser extent, energy transitions and finance. He pointed out that the role of the OECD is to help develop higher levels of ambitions over time and support the achievement of tangible outcomes. Finally, he presented on-going OECD work and networking platforms contributing to the COP26:

- The [Climate Change Expert Group \(CCXG\)](#), providing technical support to government representatives, the private sector and civil society for some of the difficult negotiation topics, such as understanding net-zero targets or reporting arrangements under the Paris Agreement;
- The OECD [Roundtable on Financing Water](#), focusing on the links between water finance and climate finance (last meeting held in September 2021), and the [OECD Water Governance Initiative](#) to engage all stakeholders in the transition;
- The [Horizontal Project on Climate and Economic Resilience](#), integrating climate and green aspects into the economic recovery packages. To date, around 20% of economic recovery packages were considered green, with the remaining 79% being at best neutral, which in some cases is actively harmful from an environmental perspective. In order to improve this situation, a report launched at COP26 aims to provide policy tools to move from losses and damages and to involve local and regional governments in climate action; and
- The [Green Recovery database](#), the [International Program of Action for Climate](#) (IPAC), respectively tracking finance trends, and progress in climate mitigation.

**Michael Mullan** concluded that the OECD would be hosting a [COP26 Virtual Pavilion](#), counting 40 OECD events on a range of topics from food security to climate finance. He emphasised the need for the water

and climate communities to come together to work on a common climate agenda and to improve on measuring progress towards the achievement of carbon neutrality goals.

**Dani Gaillard-Picher, Global Coordinator, Water and Climate Processes, Global Water Partnership (GWP)** took the floor to provide information about the 2021 session [Water and Climate Coalition Leaders "Committing to an Integrated Global Water and Climate Agenda"](#) high-level event happening on 2 November 2021. She also mentioned that the GWP is working towards catalysing climate-resilient development, through national adaptation planning, integrated resilient planning, and by facilitating access to climate finance.

**Cate Lamb, High-Level Climate Action Champions Lead – Water, from UNFCCC COP26** started her speech by stressing that according to the 2021 [IPCC Report](#) most of the extreme climate change related events manifest themselves in water. For example, droughts are already 70% more frequent and in the next decade, intense rainfalls are expected to increase by 50%. In her role as Water Lead, she is advocating for actions by state and non-state actors, such as youth, businesses, indigenous communities, financial institutions, scientists, citizens, and civil society. She clarified that *Climate Champions* were created by the UNFCCC in the run-up to COP21 in Paris (France), recognising the key role of non-state actors (in particular, business, and financial institutions) to increase national ambitions on their run-up to COP. She also mentioned the concept of [Ambition Loop](#), a theory of change based on positive feedback, in which bold government policies and non-state actors' leadership reinforce each other, and together they take climate action to the next level.

**Cate Lamb** highlighted the necessity to prioritise water security, in order to succeed in achieving both climate mitigation and resilience goals. She invited members to consult the [Marrakech Partnership Global Climate Action](#) Agenda, showcasing steps to take in order to reach the water and climate goals, as well as to provide feedback on the "[The Water Action Pathway for Climate](#)", to be launched on 5<sup>th</sup> of November 2021. She highlighted that the Water Pavilion counted on the participation of young people and indigenous communities bringing forward their demands for water protection. Finally, she added that some events would entail cooperation with NGOs, such as the [EcoPeace Middle East](#), working with youth communities in countries such as Jordan, Israel, and Palestine.

**Cate Lamb** concluded her intervention by stressing that the climate community should pay more attention to the issue of transboundary water cooperation and that a holistic approach is needed to solve water-related issues. As such, she invited WGI members to join COP26 discussions beyond those planned within the Water Pavilion, in order to connect with the climate and energy community.

**Barbara Schreiner, Executive Director, Water Integrity Network (WIN)** presented the WIN's work on climate finance, conducted with the [GCF Internal Integrity Unit](#). WIN and GCF co-organised a side event on [Enhancing Integrity to Avoid Maladaptation](#) on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021 highlighting the links between corruption and maladaptation, ensuring that adaptation funds would finance the right solutions and would not be misused.

**Lesha Witmer, Steering Committee member, Women for Water Partnership - Butterfly Effect** shared her scepticism regarding the COP26 outcomes. She appreciated the milestone of the Water Pavilion but feared that leaders would focus mainly on energy or CO<sub>2</sub>, overlooking water issues. She raised a question on how to attract negotiators, experts, and sub-committees to the Water Pavilion to ensure that the voice of the water community would be heard. She also asked in the chat how to encourage local CSOs/NGOs to participate in the exchanges, and how to connect to the [World Water Quality Alliance](#) (WWQA) stakeholder engagement Platform.

**Michael Mullan** explained that the OECD Virtual Pavilion will attract a more diverse audience, while holding water-related events. Therefore, it represents an opportunity to foster cross-sectoral discussions on water and climate. He reported that at the moment the OECD is carrying out 100+ climate-related projects, working closely with the environment and finance committees.

**Cate Lamb** added that while the Water Pavilion will not shift negotiators' views, it is key to make sure they have the right information and the right scale, with the objective that over time organisations are in a better position than if they had not participated in the Water Pavilion.

**Colin Herron, Global Coordinator of Water Solutions for the SDGs, the Global Water Partnership (GWP)** reminded that water and climate discussions were brought up since COP16, through the [Dialogues for Water and Climate](#), a week-long event attended by 650 participants (i.e., the Alliance for Global Water Adaptation, AGWA was officially born there).

**Erik van Lith, Governance Specialist, Royal Haskoning DHV** asked Michael Mullan in the chat whether the contribution to a circular economy was also part of the strategy to net-zero targets. Michael Mullan answered in the chat that the circular economy is critical for achieving net-zero targets.

**Dani Gaillard-Picher** commented in the chat that these activities are means of developing strong long-term relationships with government representatives rather than ends in themselves, which is how governments become advocates for water solutions within the formal negotiation spaces.

**Bernard Barraque, Director Emeritus of Research, International Centre for Development and Environment-National Scientific Research Centre (CIRED-CNRS)** shared his view on the chat that the EU [Green Deal](#) did not leave room for water issues. Nevertheless, they should be addressed in the regulations adopted for the implementation of the EU [Green Deal](#).

**Yumiko Asaya, Manager, Japan Water Forum** invited members to participate to the events on [The Race to Zero and Resilience, unleashing water's power](#) (Water Pavilion, 1 November 2021), and [Unlocking the Nature/Net-zero balance](#) (Tower Base South, 2 November 2021).

**Ignacio Deregibus, Deputy Executive Director, International Water Resources Association (IWRA)** confirmed in the chat that the IWRA would participate in COP26 as [official observer](#) and would also contribute to sessions within the Water Pavilion. He reported that two panel discussions would be conducted by IWRA at COP26 on the topics of [Water and Nature-Based Solutions](#) on November the 8<sup>th</sup> and on the Impacts of New Technologies on Water (1 November 2021, University of Strathclyde Technology and Innovation Centre, UK, hybrid format).

**Faith Sternlieb, Senior Program Manager, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy** shared in the chat that the Babbitt Center for Land and Water Policy in the US had developed a program called [Growing Water Smart](#) as a result of a three-day workshop bringing together senior-level city planners, water managers, and elected officials for the sole purpose of breaking down silos. It has been rolled out in two of the seven Colorado River Basin States (Colorado and Arizona) and will be expanded to the other states (Utah and California), as well as across the border with Mexico. There are several examples of [cities](#) integrating land and water in a basin facing severe water shortages, for example, the 2019 [Case Study: Bravery in the Face of Bureaucracy](#).

**Aziza Akhmouch, Head of Division, Cities, Urban Policies, and Sustainable Development Division, CFE, OECD**, stressed that stakeholder engagement and interactions of the water community with other sectors and constituencies have been long-standing concerns of the OECD WGI. As such, COP meetings should foster multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral initiatives and thinking rather than siloed discussion. As a multi-disciplinary organisation, the OECD is planning to organise a wide range of thematic sessions including water, and foster dialogue across these constituencies notably to address linkages between water and urban development through hosting or participating in several sessions among which:

- [“Promoting Zero Carbon City through making Decarbonisation Domino effect - Roles of multi-stakeholders towards subnational decarbonisation.”](#) (10 November 2021, OECD Pavilion)
- [The power of localising collaborative climate an action](#) (10 November 2021, OECD Pavilion)
- A Special session on the [Circular Economy in Glasgow](#) (10 November 2021, OECD Pavilion) that represents an opportunity to convey the right messages due to the media coverage of this event.



[“A net-zero circular water future for cities”](#) (11 November 2021, Water Pavilion), co-organised by the OECD with 50L Home Coalition, Arup, BMU, and GIZ, during which the Blue City Project will be launched.

- [“Aligning Practice, Policy, and Priorities through an Urban Water Resilience Agenda for Africa”](#) (8 November 2021, Resilience Hub) organised by WRI.
- [“City action for climate finance and resilient infrastructure”](#) (11 November 2021, Africa Pavilion) organised by UCLG Africa and the African Development Bank.
- [Girls@COP26](#) side event on gender-disaggregated data (8 November 2021).

**Peter Gammeltoft, independent consultant**, recounted his involvement in water and climate discussion for almost 20 years within the European Commission as former Head of the Water Unit and observed that actions did not follow the technical discussions in COP meetings. He also suggested that the OECD ask the Secretary-General to convey the message to world leaders on the interlinkages between the climate and water agendas. He concluded his intervention by exploring the idea that speakers like Greta Thunberg might be useful to bring the water issue to the forefront of political decisions, mobilise people and raise awareness of the water challenges in the climate area.

**The Chair** suggested to WGI members to connect to political leaders or negotiators through their own organisations or governments.

## Building a sustainable blue economy in cities

**The Chair** introduced the next agenda item on “Building a sustainable blue economy in cities” and passed the floor to **Oriana Romano, Head of the Water Governance and Circular Economy Unit, CFE, OECD** to present the [OECD Cities for a Blue Economy Project](#).

**Oriana Romano** first thanked **Juliette Lassman, Junior Policy Analyst, OECD** for her work on this topic. She started her presentation by providing a definition of the blue economy, which refers to the economic activities that depend on water and water-related environments, such as fishery, tourism but also marine ecosystem services, tidal energy, and seabed mining. The impact of the blue economy in terms of added value and employment is remarkable: if the global blue economy was a country, it would be the seventh largest in the world and the ocean as an economic entity would be a member of the G7. In addition, 4.5 million direct jobs in Europe depend on the blue economy and the ecosystem services generated within the 10-kilometre coastal zone are worth about €500 billion.

**Oriana Romano** shared three main messages:

1. *There is no economic resilience without water resilience*: by 2050, 80% of climate change effects will manifest in the form of water-related events. By the same date, at least 570 low-lying cities around the world will be affected by sea-level rise, while droughts could potentially reduce city economy growth by up to 12%, and 75% of cities interviewed in the 2016 OECD [Water Governance in Cities](#) declared water pollution to be a great challenge. As such, cities, in particular those in which economic prosperity depends on marine and freshwater environments, should pay attention to the links between their blue economies and levels of water security;
2. *Cities play a key role in fostering a sustainable blue economy*. First, because many economic activities take place at a local level (e.g., tourism or fishery) with impacts on local jobs, attractiveness, and competitiveness; second, cities hold the competences on land use, special planning, or waste management among others that greatly affect the level of water security and quality, which, in turn, affects the blue economy. Third, subnational finance for climate investments includes water-related infrastructure. This is also an important moment to take further action, given

that within the green recovery post-COVID-19, only 8% of measures account for water-related initiatives, according to the [OECD Green Recovery Database](#); and

3. *Cities could put in place a RISC-proof approach to a blue economy, by setting up the enabling governance conditions at the right scale (i.e., basin).* The RISC-proof approach developed in the [OECD Cities for a Blue Economy Project](#) focuses on four pillars: i) Resilience, by integrating water policies with economic activities to manage risks and to seek for opportunities; ii) Inclusiveness, to account for local jobs related to the blue economy and protect vulnerable people; iii) Sustainability, taking into account nature-based solutions and green infrastructure to protect the cities from water disastrous events; and iv) Circularity, linking water and waste policies to manage plastics and other residual from land that affects water pollution. The [OECD Principles on Water Governance](#) provide a guiding framework to improve water governance systems at the appropriate scales.

**Oriana Romano** explained that the project intends to support interested cities and basins to improve their resilience, inclusiveness, sustainability, and circularity within their blue economies, through:

- **Learning:** engaging multi-level policy dialogues in cities and basins to identify challenges and opportunities for the blue economy applying the RISC-proof approach;
- **Sharing:** favouring peer-to-peer learning, national-subnational exchanges, best practice, and lessons from international experience across cities and basins to strengthen the link between the blue economy and green recovery;
- **Measuring:** collecting and analysing data on the state of the art and progress of cities and basins towards the RISC-proof approach; and
- **Guiding:** defining policy recommendations, action plans and checklist for action for blue cities.

The project will have a 3 years' timeline. As a first step, results of a Global Survey will be shared at COP27. A synthesis report will be produced on time for the [2023 UN Conference on the Water Action Decade](#). After the presentation by the Secretariat, several WGI members shared their comments on the proposal and interest in possible collaborations.

**Dirk Van der Stede, Senior Advisor, Flanders Knowledge Centre Water, Belgium** mentioned in the chat that linking water and soil is an example of a systemic approach.

**The Chair** passed the floor to the second speaker: **Eric Tardieu, Secretary-General of International Network of Basin Organisations (INBO)**. He highlighted that since 2019, strengthening cities and basins dialogue has been a priority for INBO. He explained that cities are “unavoidable singularities” for basin-level approaches, given their growing population and the potential increase of water-related risks, such as flood, pollution, or concentrated water demand. Nonetheless, the dialogue between basins and cities is poorly addressed in terms of governance, information exchange and data transfer, mainly because of insufficient integration of planning and efficient water management at scale.

**Eric Tardieu** explained that INBO and the International Water Association (IWA) have jointly developed the INBO-IWA Handbook on city-basin dialogue, due in 2022, to establish a compendium of good practices for collaboration between cities and basins, especially for mid-sized cities. The Handbook will be launched at the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum in Dakar, Senegal, in March 2022. The main priorities of the Handbook are to reconnect urban players to their catchment area; to improve planning and financing of public policies, encourage new measures for a better integration of nature-based solutions; to implement and finance those measures and determine the risk-based approach; and to assess the efficiency of measures taken. The Handbook will comprise a compilation of recommendations and testimonies about 30 “basin stories”. **Eric Tardieu** encouraged participants to contact his team to share stories to contribute to the Handbook.

**Eric Tardieu** finally informed participants that two webinars held in November 2020 were dedicated to the [INBO-IWA dialogue](#). He finally presented the dialogue example between a city and a basin from France

and Mexico, which had been explored in a webinar on [City-basin dialogue for adaptation to climate change: French and Mexican approaches](#) (28 January 2021, on-line).

**The Chair** passed the floor to the third speaker: **Gustavo Saltiel, Global Lead for Water and Sanitation, World Bank**, who introduced the Water in Circular Economy and Resilience, [WICER](#) initiative. The project aims to develop a common understanding of the circular economy in the urban water and sanitation sector, and to support World Bank's clients to implement these principles to ensure resilient, sustainable, and inclusive water urban sanitation services. The WICER framework is a key component of the water secure cities initiative and has three main outcomes:

- *Deliver resilient and inclusive services.* It is key to plan and invest in water security and resilience to climatic and non-climatic uncertainties. He argued that the traditional planning approach to water infrastructure and investment design is no longer adequate to address the emerging challenges of climate change risks and public health. This has fuelled a paradigm shift to flexible and robust systemic decision-making approaches that consider the characteristics of water systems and describe them in terms of exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity in order to withstand different shocks and stresses;
- *Design out waste and pollution.* Water supply sanitation utilities need to better understand the resources' flows to identify opportunities to recover underutilised or wasted resources. He commented that the World Bank has documented numerous examples of the use of water, nutrients or energy including in developing countries. He regretted poor utility operations and management, which prevented important achievements in the blue or circular economy; and
- *Reserve and regenerate natural systems.* He focused on the importance of treating wastewater, especially in developing countries, to improve the conditions of natural systems.

**Gustavo Saltiel** pointed out that in spite of being outside of the OECD scope, the ambitious idea of implementing a circular economy approach in developing countries is feasible. Reviews of different cases from Africa, Latin America or Asia by the World Bank show that a circular economy can provide the resources needed to finance the promotion of energy efficiency, the reduction of non-revenue water and the use of nature-based solutions. He concluded his intervention by stating that without robust governance systems, water governance and circular economy in cities would not happen. It requires horizontal coordination, within the city, but also at vertical coordination between the city and institutional and political structures at the basin and national level and even beyond.

The OECD Secretariat launched two questions on Mentimeter. The first one was: *In your experience, what should characterise a blue city?* The results to this question show a predominance of the concepts of resilience, circularity, and sustainability, in line with the RISC-proof approach (Figure 1).

Figure 1. In your experience, what should characterise a blue city? A word cloud.



Source: Mentimeter, 15<sup>th</sup> OECD WGI meeting, 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

The second question asked: *what blue economy activities connect cities and basins?* The following options were provided:

- Regional planning
- WRM
- Political will
- Service delivery to remote communities
- Governance scales
- Stability of water supply
- Wastewater reuse
- Food production
- Protection and sustainable use of water resources and alternative water resources
- Integrated economic practices
- City partnership
- Pollution

Food production, protection, and sustainable use of water resources and alternative water resources appeared as key activities connecting cities and basins.

**Gari Villa-Landa Sokolova, Head on international Affairs, Spanish Association of Water Supply (AEAS)** pointed out that the discussion was very timely and thanked speakers for their interventions. She indicated its relevance for those working at the EU level with the [Water Framework Directive](#) and the EU [Green Deal](#). She asked how water service providers could further contribute.

**Ian Barker, Managing Director, Water Policy International** argued that breaking the problem into separate elements would allow to envision practical solutions. Secondly, he suggested taking into account buildings retrofitting in order to minimise their footprint on water and the environment, in terms of runoff water quality. Thirdly, he raised the point on the paved areas of the highways and open spaces, which not only contribute to runoff during periods of intensive rainfall, but also in terms of pollution from micro-plastics, metals or hydrocarbons. Fourthly, he reflected on nature-based solutions and their multiple benefits to enhance flexibility and adaptability to changing expectations and standards. He emphasised the importance of policy alignment, as indicated in previous presentations.

**Sharon Megdal, Director, University of Arizona, Water Resources Research Center** highlighted that a key challenge for water-scarce areas is to retrofit and design to use less water. Retrofitting, landscaping, or permeability of materials, and new community design (individual buildings and general design) are very important. Moreover, she also elaborated on the concept of “water-information”, which she defined as the knowledge about water and where it comes from.

**Faith Sternlieb, Senior Program Manager, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy** explained in the chat that many local governments were unaware of the limits of their mandates, which is why the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy started providing resources to cities to better understand their decision-making power.

**Susana Neto, Researcher, Civil Engineering Research and Innovation for Sustainability, University of Lisbon, Portugal** focused her intervention on the role of cities. She explained that there are overlapping challenges when it comes to cities’ roles, in particular, their capacity to deal with complex issues. A long-term vision is needed to address these challenges, despite short political cycles. She concluded by saying that the question of how to promote better knowledge that makes it possible to implement the right solutions is key.

**Peter Gammeltoft, independent consultant** subscribed to the views about the needs for link policy and capacity. He made some suggestions on the OECD Scoping Note: First, the resilience chapter should explicitly talk about adaptation to climate change because this is a catchphrase for mayors; they all already recognise it as a priority. Second, concerning the issue of inclusiveness, he advised creating a link with the SDGs. Third, regarding circularity, the document should have further address the link between circularity and governance, even though there is already information on the need to enhance the circular economy.

**Bernard Barraque, Director Emeritus of Research, International Centre for Development and Environment-National Scientific Research Centre (CIRED-CNRS)** argued that in order to get closer to the implementation of article 9 of the Water Framework Directive, it is not possible to cover all the costs through the tariffs, but also through taxes and transfers as argued by the 3T OECD model. He argued that water users should contribute to the aquatic environment through the covering of these costs and governments should find a way to cover them. For this reason, he encouraged participants to reflect and explore the links between cities and their water services and river basin institutions and water resources in general.

**Khatim Kherraz, Director of Strategy and Programmes, World Water Council** reacted to the lack of long-term vision of local policies. He argued that the problem is not entirely due to the duration of the mandate, but to national governments’ reluctance to give more power to local authorities.

**Kevin Collins, Senior Lecturer, the Open University, United Kingdom** pointed out that the connection between people and urban populations and natural environments surrounding their cities was missing in the scoping note. Local governments often struggle to engage with their cities' communities.

**Barbara Schreiner, Executive Director, Water Integrity Network (WIN)** shared that while she agreed with **Bernard Barraque** about the “3Ts” (tax, transparency, and transfers), she thought it would also be necessary to update it by deducing “C”, which would represent “corruption”. She also added that in the

framework of the 2021 [Water Integrity Global Outlook on Urban Water Sanitation](#), they could identify ways of working with municipalities and rural players from the urban water sectors.

**Lesha Witmer** agreed with **Kevin Collins**. She emphasised that the [OECD Blue Cities Project](#) proposal should more clearly include stakeholder engagement (including civil society organisations, women, or farmers).

**Dirk Van der Stede, Senior Advisor from Flanders Knowledge Centre Water, Belgium** expressed that the scoping note should include a systemic integrated approach with different disciplines, agreeing with previous members on the question of stakeholder involvement. He argued that some projects led at the municipal level do not consider interactions with industries or agriculture.

**The Chair** pointed out the relationship between water management and soil degradation, as necessary to address both water and soil issues. Second, he argued that a shift towards a circular economy must be accompanied by a shift towards taxation on virgin resources and not simply tax refurbishing or taxing the labour force.

## Day 1 Closing

**The Chair** thanked the speakers, the interpreters, and the Secretariat. He invited WGI members to reconvene the following day (28 September 2021).

## Day 2: September 28, 2021

### WGI Contribution to the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum (Dakar, March 2022)

**Peter Glas, Chair of the OECD Water Governance Initiative (WGI)**, thanked the OECD Secretariat for organising the meeting, and the WGI members and the Steering Committee for their active participation. He summarised the content of Day 1, including the OECD WGI Contribution to global agendas and COP26 and the presentation of the [OECD Cities for a Blue Economy Project](#), with interventions by INBO and World Bank. He introduced the agenda of Day 2, focusing on: the preparation towards the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum taking place in Dakar from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> March 2022 and the implementation strategy of the [OECD Principles on Water Governance](#). He gave the floor to **Gustavo Saltiel, Global Lead for Water and Sanitation from the World Bank**, and **Eric Tardieu, Secretary-General of International Network of Basin Organisations (INBO)** to add any comment to the presentations they made on Day 1.

**Gustavo Saltiel** highlighted the importance of the link between smart and green technologies in relation to blue economy in cities, which is key for suppliers, service providers and policy makers. Moreover, he called for improving the dialogue between public authorities and private actors, because it provides new economic approaches and new ways of financing water services, including at the urban level.

**Eric Tardieu** argued that strong service providers, regulations, interactions with policy makers, and discussions about funding and subsidies are necessary. Moreover, various levels of government should work together towards better policy alignment. For example, national governments could provide financial incentives to cities to promote sustainable blue economies at the local level.

**The Chair** thanked **Gustavo Saltiel** and **Eric Tardieu** for their contributions and the discussions on the second item of the agenda on the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum. He then introduced the next speaker: **Abdoulaye Sene, Executive Director, 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum**.

**Abdoulaye Sene, Executive Director, 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum** thanked **the Chair** and **Aziza Akhmouch, Head of Division, Cities, Urban Policies, and Sustainable Development Division, CFE, OECD**. He appreciated the support of the OECD WGI in the preparation of the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum and recognised the valuable work carried out by the OECD in mobilising local authorities, particularly through the OECD / UCLG-Africa *Roundtable of African Mayors for Water Security*, to be launched at the Forum. He then commented on the progress of the Forum process: first, he noted that the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum placed water governance at the heart of its priorities, while considering the importance of equitable and sustainable access to water for all. It will also put water at the heart of the international political agenda. Second, he highlighted the role of the Senegalese government that intends to organise not only political segments dedicated to ministers, parliamentarians, local authorities, basin organisations and other stakeholders, but also a Summit of Heads of State to mobilise commitments and catalyse action for the acceleration of universal access to water and sanitation. The ambition is to ensure that the results will feed the preparatory process for the [2023 United Nations Water Decade Conference](#) (22–24 March, New York,

USA). **Abdoulaye Sene** mentioned that, through the [digital platform](#) more than 1000 actors, 4 Pilot Groups, 23 Action Groups as well as members of Advisory Groups managed to discuss the four Priorities of the Forum: i) Water and Sanitation for Water Security, ii) Water for Rural Development, iii) Cooperation, and iv) Means and Tools. At the [Second Stakeholder Meeting](#), (14–15 October 2021, Dakar, Senegal) participants would discuss Key Political Messages and Actions as well as the session proposals that have emerged during the consultation process. The Forum also signed 15 International Partnership Protocols, and 20 additional protocols nationwide are on-going. The Forum labelled 58 projects under the [Dakar 2022 initiative](#). He invited WGI members to submit their projects for labelling since new rounds of selection will be organised until December 2021. **Abdoulaye Sene** informed that the Forum is consolidating and multiplying water dialogues, forums at the local, national, and international levels, like the [Arab Water Forum in Dubai](#) in September 2021. It will also launch publications and exhibitions, including the African village exhibition aiming to foster synergies, share experiences and cooperation.

**Khatim Kherraz, Director of Strategy and Programmes, World Water Council (WWC)** briefly introduced the World Water Council, an international organisation and a multi-stakeholder platform created in 1996 and based in Marseille, France. It represents 360 member organisations in 57 countries playing an active role in the implementation of the program. It is the founder and owner of the concept of the World Water Forum and has co-organised it every three years since 1998, with a different host country each time. He thanked the OECD for its involvement in the thematic sessions. In addition, the World Water Council organises High-Level panels and Special Sessions during the Forum, prepares the outcomes and main message, contributes to international Forums, and events prior to the Forum and participates in the labelling process of Dakar. Khatim Kherraz celebrated the organisation of a Summit of Heads of State in the margins of the Forum. The Council works on five thematic Groups related to water security, finance, integrated water resources management, COVID-19, and global changes to ensure that the discussions and stakeholders mobilisation continue after the Forum.

**Aziza Akhmouch, Head of Division, Cities, Urban Policies, and Sustainable Development Division, CFE, OECD**, presented the coordination activities of Priority 4 on Means and Tools referring to finance, governance, and science, undertaken by the OECD Secretariat. She reported on the three main tasks performed during the last months namely the elaboration of Political Messages and Actions that will be shared during the Forum; the coordination of the thematic work, with five Action Groups; and the engagement of stakeholders in the development of the programme of the Forum, by identifying the key priorities and building the session plans. Some of the planned outcomes of Pilot Group 4 include:

- High-level political commitments, which can help reach new constituencies, for example, the OECD/UCLGA Roundtable of African Mayors for Water Security;
- Guiding frameworks, such as: a manifesto for laws and integrated water governance, which would facilitate the engagement of judges and lawyers; a Parliamentarian's Handbook on the Human right to water and sanitation, and; a Handbook on the Financial Means and Tools available for the water and sanitation sector will also be developed;
- Awareness-raising and capacity building campaigns; and
- Evidence-based results, through the Special Issue of the Journal Water International: [“The OECD Principles on Water Governance as a means to an end: how to measure impacts of water governance?”](#)

**Aziza Akhmouch** ended her intervention by explaining that a total of 26 sessions will be organised by Pilot Group 4. The Key Political Messages and Key Actions would be approved by the end of December and shared with the WGI members.

**Pierre-Alain Roche, Member of General Council for Environment and Sustainable development, Ministry of Ecological Transition, France** provided some insights on the Key Political Messages of the Priority. He affirmed that with the current policies in place, we are not on track to meet the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, in particular SDG 6 on the water for all. Some of the key barriers are related



to governance, financing, participation, and the support of actors. Pilot Group 4 proposed some solutions relating to mobilisation mechanisms, skills and knowledge, capacity building and robust legal frameworks. Regarding the session plan, Pierre-Alain Roche explained that Action Group 4 gathered solutions, mobilisation mechanisms, skills, knowledge, capacity building and robust legal frameworks and conveyed them into 26 sessions for Dakar.

**Barbara Schreiner, Executive Director, Water Integrity Network (WIN)** provided an overview of the activities of Action Group 4.D, concerning the establishment of effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels. The activities of this Action Group are structured around three main themes: First, the commitment of parliamentarians and civil society to promote and sustain transparency and accountability in the field of water and sanitation. This is directly linked to the outcome of the Parliamentarian's Handbook on the Human right to water and sanitation. Second, the Clean Hands to Save Lives campaign, which nurtures the new generation of young leaders to promote transparency, integrity, and accountability. Third, the coordinated platform for the implementation of water and science in the context of accountability, transparency, and integrity in relation to sanitation. The objective would be to train 50 local elected representatives with 50 partnerships with various government authorities, to focus on this issue of local governance and sanitation. Regarding the Political Messages proposed within the framework of the Action Group 4.D, she clarified that good governance does not only concern the government, but also stakeholders at all levels. She concluded by mentioning that indigenous populations and minorities, are the most vulnerable to water scarcity and they require special attention; therefore, they need to be included in the decision-making processes to achieve inclusiveness.

**Stefano Burchi, President, International Association for Water Law (AIDA)** addressed the role of Action Group 4.C, which is about fostering a water-sensitive approach to legislation and regulation. The action of this group represents an opportunity to replace the rule of law in the integrated management and governance of freshwater. Action Group 4.C aims to draft a *manifesto* from the conceptualisation to the implementation of integrated legislation for water resources management and freshwater governance, while encouraging and supporting the action of national governments, parliamentarians, and judicial organisations for the implementation of water laws. The Key Political Message of Action Group 4.C focuses on effective and fundamental water law for the good management of freshwater resources and the necessity to ensure that different criteria and parameters are met.

**Abou Amani, Secretary of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme, UNESCO** presented the achievements of Action Group 4.E, focusing on increasing water efficiency and sustainable management of water through science, technology, innovation, and education. This Action Group brings together key stakeholders, scientists, and policy makers to ensure that policy decisions are made on the basis of reliable data. He identified Key Political Messages: first, political decisions must be taken based on reliable facts, data, and analysis. He argued that knowledge systems and scientific data must be used as a basis for political decision-making, at the local and national levels. Second, he insisted on the necessity to invest in capacity building to nurture and improve the knowledge base, since science and innovation give access to information for evaluation, monitoring and policy making. This knowledge, apart from being available, must be accessible for all, exemplifying that according to results from the UNESCO report four out of five countries still spend less than 1% of their GDP on research. He argued that to close this gap of knowledge, in terms of capacities in the field of water resources, it is necessary to increase the GDP share devoted to research.

**Burcu Calli, Expert, Turkish Water Institute (SUEN)** announced that the Turkish Water Institute would participate in the preparatory work towards the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum. Their current research and activities involve technical studies on epidemiology or monitoring. She explained that they also had proposals to promote global cooperation and synergies in response to the pandemic and foster a sustainable recovery considering local governance in the field of water resources. She encouraged WGI members to get in touch to build partnerships on common areas of interest.

**Lesha Witmer, Steering Committee member, Women for Water Partnership - Butterfly Effect** communicated that the Women for Water Partnership and the Butterfly Effect would like to contribute to the activities of Pilot Group 4. She also asked for clarification on how the OECD WGI will relay the Political Messages to the different levels of government and in particular to Heads of State. She finally suggested in the chat that another meeting of the OECD WGI should be organised before the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum to coordinate actions and ensure coordination between members.

**Abdoulaye Sene, Executive Director, 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum** encouraged the members to assist at the Second Stakeholder meeting (14–15 October, Dakar, Senegal) to take part in the discussions and be involved in the preparatory process towards the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum.

**Mohamed Diatta, Coordinator of the Scientific Unit, 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum** raised some questions on how to explore innovative financing mechanisms in developing countries reducing their debt and whether this would come along with benefits in terms of access to water services. He continued pointing out that it was necessary to find ways to strengthen the legal framework at the country level to take better account of the issues of water access and the protection of resources. The gender and inclusion dimensions should also be considered. Finally, he noted that closing the digital gap could promote better management of water services and that questioned how capacity building would make it possible to deal with present and future challenges, specifically in developing countries and regarding sustainable management.

**Donal O’Leary, Senior Advisor, Transparency International** commented that, in relation to the activities of Action Group 4.C, when it comes to SDG 16, about peace, justice and strong institutions, particularly in relation to corruption, there are two major challenges in Africa. First, African countries score low in the [Corruption Index](#). Second, during the COVID-19 period, more attention should be focused on involving civil society organisations in the supervision of governmental performance, since many African countries have not performed well in terms of corruption and emergency funding. Regarding the terms of reference of the Roundtable of African Mayors for water security, he suggested including additional English-speaking cities, from Eastern and Southern Africa, in particular cities from Kenya.

**Pierre-Alain Roche, Member of General Council for Environment and Sustainable development, Ministry of Ecological Transition, France** explained that discussions regarding financial issues were at the heart of Action Group 4. He clarified that all the dynamics proposed were based on feedback from the COVID-19 crisis. Action Group 4.A and 4.B would hold a session intended to give a voice to populations who do not have it.

**Erik van Lith, Governance Specialist, Royal Haskoning DHV** mentioned in the chat that it would be positive and important to represent indigenous people in the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum as well as in the OECD/ UCLG-Africa Roundtable of African Mayors for Water Security.

**Gustavo Saltiel, Global Lead for Water and Sanitation, World Bank** added that the World Bank was working with the government of Senegal and partners in organising a high-level plenary to bring together sanitation, circular economy, and finance. The idea is to highlight the role of sanitation and the circular economy in climate change.

**Aziza Akhmouch** provided WGI members with an update on the OECD/ UCLG-Africa Roundtable of African Mayors for Water Security, which terms of reference were sent prior to the Meeting. The initiative is a follow up of the [King Hassan II World Water Prize](#) received by the former OECD Secretary-General Ángel Gurría, during the 8<sup>th</sup> [World Water Forum in Brasilia](#) in 2018. Targeted cities should be both francophone and anglophone to strike geographical representation and reflect varying exposure to water challenges. She informed the members that the Roundtable was submitted to the Dakar labelling process and that the first informal on-line meeting for this Roundtable would be organised on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021. She invited WGI members to provide comments on the terms of reference and on the initiative.

**Abdoulaye Sene, Executive Director, 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum** recognised the excellent job done by the Pilot Groups and informed that the results of the consultation process would be examined and approved

at the Second Stakeholders' meeting in Dakar. He also welcomed proposals for sessions and Roundtables and showed his commitment to work with the OECD WGI to bring the message on water governance, especially related to local authorities, to the World Water Forum.

**The Chair** thanked **Abdoulaye Sene** for his intervention and moved to the next item in the agenda: the implementation of the [OECD Principles on Water Governance](#) and the achievements of the Working Group on Impact Indicators. He gave the floor to **Oriana Romano**, Head of the Water Governance and Circular Economy Unit, CFE, OECD.

## Implementing the OECD principles on Water Governance: update

**Oriana Romano, Head of the Water Governance and Circular Economy Unit, CFE, OECD**, reminded WGI members that the work of the Working Group on Impact Indicators and on Capacity Building was discussed at the 14<sup>th</sup> OECD WGI meeting, in particular, the Working Paper on Impact Indicators produced by the Secretariat, and the Draft Capacity Development Toolkit. She introduced three initiatives:

- The Special Issue on “[The OECD Principles on Water Governance as a means to an end: how to measure impacts of water governance?](#)” of the Water International Journal. The Special Issue aims to highlight water governance impacts on socio-economic, and environmental dimensions. Measuring impacts is a challenging task, due to caveats, such as the lack of a comprehensive framework to measure impacts of water governance, the fact that indicators are not widely used, that impacts are dependent on other factors beyond water governance and that impacts are subjective. These pitfalls would be discussed in the Special Issue.
- The Capacity Development Toolkit was tested in a humanitarian context with the help of Waterpreneurs and Action Against Hunger. The Capacity Development Toolkit is a guide to implement the 10-step methodology to self-evaluate water governance systems in place through the [OECD Water Governance Indicator Framework](#). Once final, the Toolkit could be translated into several languages and transformed into an on-line and easy-to-use tool.
- The script for an Animation Video on the [OECD Principles on Water Governance](#) to raise awareness and explain what water governance is to a wider audience. In order to develop the script, the text and the visuals, the Secretariat consulted several communication experts. The video will be composed of three parts: the first part will describe the importance of water, highlighting the role of COVID-19, which acted as a magnifying glass on pre-existing water and sanitation challenges. Second, the size and importance of water-related risks will be assessed, especially access to safe drinking water and sanitation services. She encouraged WGI members to share their feedback and contributions to finalise the deliverables before the Forum.

**James Nickum, Editor in Chief, International Water Resources Association (IWRA)** presented the Official Journal of the [International Water Resources Association](#). The Water International Journal publishes one Special Issue a year, edited by Routledge Press. As part of this first collaboration between IWRA and the OECD Secretariat, the journal received more than 40 abstracts as a reply to the call for abstracts for the March 2022 [Special Issue “The OECD Principles on Water Governance as a means to an end: how to measure impacts of water governance?”](#) The abstracts were peer-reviewed, on a voluntary basis by the Steering Committee members of the OECD WGI. **James Nickum** explained that, in order to maximise the impacts and the diffusion of the Special Issue, hard copies of the Special Issue will be printed. A policy brief including a webinar will also be accessible on-line, and the on-line version of the Special Issue will be broadcasted through social media and a blog publication. He mentioned that the Special Issue should be published in March 2022 but expressed the possibility to post some of the articles on-line before this date. He concluded his intervention by inviting members to join the [XVII World Water Congress](#) (29 November–3 December 2021), taking place in Daegu, Korea.

**Nicolas Lorne, President and Co-founder of Waterpreneurs** presented the work of Waterpreneurs on the implementation of the [OECD Principles on Water Governance](#). Waterpreneurs had tested the Toolkit in Nigeria and Mali in 2019, and in DRC in 2021, within a series of governance studies in humanitarian contexts projects, carried out with *Action Against Hunger*. These governance studies relied on three methodologies:

- The methodology used by Action Against Hunger, detailed in the manual [Governance of Water and Sanitation as Applied to Humanitarian and Development Projects](#);
- [IRCWASH Methodology](#) that is at the heart of the governance studies undertaken by Waterpreneurs; and
- The 12 [OECD Principles on Water Governance](#). The following Principles were the most critical in humanitarian contexts: Clear Roles and Responsibility (Principle 1), Capacity (Principle 4), Data and Information (Principle 5), Financing (Principle 6), Integrity and Transparency (Principle 9), Stakeholder Engagement (Principle 10), and Monitoring and Evaluation (Principle 12) were the principles

**Nicolas Lorne** further elaborated on the methodology: while the OECD methodology relies on the results collected during the multi-stakeholder workshop prepared beforehand, and led by an external facilitator, the assessment led by Action Against Hunger relies on a pre-evaluation, consisting of stakeholder mapping, interviews, community discussions, and undertaken before going to the field. **Nicolas Lorne**, with the help of local consultants, conducted this pre-evaluation and proposed an action plan that was discussed with local stakeholders during the workshop. In fact, ACF asked the expert to prepare pre-recommendations that would be aligned with the objectives of the European Union and aiming at helping stakeholders reach a consensus.

**Nicolas Lorne** concluded his intervention by highlighting the benefits of a blended approach combining different policy frameworks. He argued that the OECD checklist was extremely useful to guide the assessment (106 questions). However, he pointed out that OECD Toolkit was difficult to implement in a humanitarian environment, without solid legislation or institutions, but was more adapted to developed countries. He added that planning and infrastructure were not strongly represented in the [OECD Water Governance Principles](#). In addition, the ACF/Waterpreneurs mixed approach fast-tracks seem to require less budget than the OECD Toolkit.

**The Chair** thanked **Nicolas Lorne** for his detailed presentation and opened the floor to WGI members to comment on the March 2022 Special Issue "[The OECD Principles on Water Governance as a means to an end: how to measure impacts of water governance?](#)" of the Water International Journal or the three-minute video.

**Kevin Collins, Senior Lecturer, the Open University, United Kingdom** enquired **Nicolas Lorne** about the methodology to provide the pre-recommendations prior to the evaluation workshop. He also wondered if this process would allow to build the capacity of local stakeholders.

**Nicolas Lorne** clarified that Action Against Hunger had already carried out more than fifteen governance studies in the past, and the recommendations were provided by high level and internationally recognised experts in human rights.

**Peter Gammeltoft**, asked about the trade-off between time constraints and the approach chosen by ACF. He suggested that Action Against Hunger's methodology may be influenced by time constraints specific to humanitarian contexts with a risk of opting for an approach that may require more resources later on to correct potential mistakes.

**Oriana Romano** mentioned that the Secretariat prepared an information session for **Nicolas Lorne** on the OECD principles, indicators, and list of questions, prior to the testing of the Toolkit.

**Lesha Witmer, Steering Committee member, Women for Water Partnership - Butterfly Effect** suggested connecting with Lorne and Oriana Romano for discussing further the Toolkit.

**Colin Herron, Global Coordinator, Water Solutions for the SDGs, Global Water Partnership (GWP)** commented in the chat that although the SDG 6 link was in the Animation Video, it should be brought to the fore more by the OECD WGI.

### Closing of the 15<sup>th</sup> WGI meeting

**The Chair** concluded that the two-day zoom meeting informed about COP26 in November, the Dakar World Water Forum in March 2022, and the UN Water Conference in 2023. He thanked the Steering Committee and the Secretariat. **The** PowerPoint presentations and the list of participants would be available on-line, and that members would receive a document to collect their contributions for the COP26, alongside an update of the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum and the political messages.

**The Chair** thanked the interpreters and the Secretariat, **Oriana Romano, Maria Salvetti**, Policy Analyst, OECD, **Mélissa Kerim-Dikeni**, Junior Policy Analyst, OECD, **Ander Eizaguirre**, Junior Policy Analyst, OECD, and **Juliette Lassman**, Junior Policy Analyst, OECD. He invite members to the 16<sup>th</sup> OECD WGI Meeting.