

Commissioner Kadri Simson
Energy
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels – Belgium

Brussels, 9th June 2020

Subject: Main priorities for water under the Commission 2019-2024

Dear Commissioner,

For nine consecutive years, the World Economic Forum has ranked water crises as a top global societal risk in terms of impact on every aspect of our lives. The post COVID19 situation in Europe is a wake-up call to switch to a new paradigm in which consideration for water security and risk management are prerequisites.

The EU Water Alliance, composed of a broad range of water-related stakeholders, has therefore addressed key messages to Von der Leyen's Commission (see annex 1). As you are entrusted with the role of Commissioner for Energy, water-related challenges directly impact your mission to provide safe, secure and sustainable energy for Europe, empowering people and regions alike. **Therefore, this large coalition of water-related stakeholders kindly requests a meeting with you to discuss the following points of interest:**

- The importance of the water-energy nexus. Water and energy efficiency go hand in hand: Both an energy efficient or energy-producing water sector and conversely, water efficiency within the energy sector will support environmental objectives. The Green Deal is an opportunity to mitigate GHGs and to reduce the use of water by fully exploiting the water-energy nexus (extracting energy from water fluxes, exploiting energy gradients in water and reducing energy-intensive water needs such as heating and cooling).
- The challenge of small and large-scale hydropower as a potential source of renewable energy production but with major environmental impacts on river basins, and the risk for fishery, agriculture and transport. This risk is high especially when one contemplates the issue of aging infrastructures. Aspects to consider also include the contribution to global warming through the discharge of greenhouse gases by hydroelectric dams and the likelihood of climate change inducing longer droughts and more intense floods which can increase challenges for other water users. The tools to ensure that hydropower is more sustainable are available but remain to a large extent, unknown and are seldom employed.
- The need to better exploit the value in water by extracting and valorising energy embedded in used water streams. This opportunity offers a new source of energy in line with the zero-pollution strategy and increases the flexibility for the sector to provide

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safe, secure and sustainable energy at a local level, empowering people within the implementation process by means of the Living Labs approach.

- The creation of Water oriented Living Labs (WoLLs) to test new solutions and increase synergies between the water and energy sectors in order to increase the development of clean energy and a more reliable energy supply whilst securing and implementing energy-efficiency and renewable-energy measures. The Just Transition Fund can support industrial and energy intensive regional initiatives to create a Water Smart Society which will further lead to the enhancement of the water-energy nexus and the subsequent establishment of an Energy Smart society.
- At all levels of intervention, it is the opinion of the consortium that fully inclusive approaches involving all stakeholders and the establishment of true joint ownership of the solutions by the collective exploration of alternatives, benefits and risks is fundamental.

We are determined to form a proactive part of the solution.

Therefore, we look forward to scheduling a meeting to discuss these issues at your earliest convenience. The contact point for further communication is Durk Krol, Water Europe Executive director, durk.krol@watereurope.eu, tel: +32 2 7068292

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Water Europe Director
Durk Krol



On behalf of:



Enclosed:

- Annex 1: EUWA Manifesto

Commissioner Margrethe Vestager
Executive Vice-President for Europe Fit for the Digital Age
Competition
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels – Belgium

Brussels, 9th June 2020

Subject: Main priorities for water under the Commission 2019-2024

Dear Commissioner,

For nine consecutive years, the World Economic Forum has ranked water crises as a top global societal risk in terms of impact on every aspect of our lives. The post COVID19 situation in Europe is a wake-up call to switch to a new paradigm in which consideration for water security and risk management are prerequisites.

The EU Water Alliance, composed of a wide range of water-related stakeholders, has therefore addressed key messages to Von der Leyen's Commission (see annex 1). As you are entrusted with the role of Vice-President for Europe Fit for the Digital Age, the water-related challenges have a direct impact on your mission to strategically ensure that Europe is prepared for the digital age and to further guarantee legislation regarding competition in order to achieve a strong European industrial presence throughout the World.

If the search for solutions to water-related challenges is not considered as a priority, European industry will not be in a position to compete at a global level and the threat of insecurity due to a lack of water quality and quantity will be ever present.

Therefore, this broad coalition of water-related stakeholders kindly request a meeting with you to discuss the challenges and opportunities described below. Water is a key element within your portfolio that will have an important impact on European society and beyond:

- Water-related risks represent the principal challenges of the decade for industrial strategy and economic models. No effective climate policy or strategy can afford to omit water issues within a truly holistic approach to the addressing of the challenges presented by climate change. The Circular Economy Action Plan offers new opportunities for the reuse of water from industry. This further presents solutions that will permit industry to face the future with confidence. However, the absence of water-related challenges in the industrial strategy of the directorate leads one to question the capacity to ensure that industry and SMEs would be sufficiently resilient to climate change. SMEs are of paramount importance for the European economy and the directorate's strategy should fully encompass the value in water to efficiently prepare SMEs within a long-term approach.
- Industry has a significant impact on the environment. The Green Deal is an opportunity to promote the visibility of water-related challenges and dismantle the silo-approach by

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presenting a full picture of their connections to health, education, sustainable economic development, industry, innovation, security, digitalisation, gender equality, agriculture and oceans, to name but a few examples. By investing in a European Water Smart Society, Europe will contribute to ensuring the resilience of both SMEs and industry whilst fostering the single market. Water-oriented Living Labs (WoLLs) are a powerful tool that should be included in SME and industrial strategy by strengthening cross-sectoral cooperation between stakeholders, local authorities and citizens and who combined can contribute to a strong European industrial presence in the World.

- The digitalisation of the water sector through, for example the use of optimisation and management software will guarantee both the security of water quality and quantity and have a positive impact on water-based economic activity. The EU Water Alliance would therefore suggest that the directorate carefully considers the idiosyncracies of the water sector and ensures that this critical resource is well prepared for the future.

We are determined to form a proactive part of the solution.

Therefore, we look forward to scheduling a meeting to discuss these issues at your earliest convenience. The contact point for further communication is Durk Krol, Water Europe Executive director, durk.krol@watereurope.eu, tel: +32 2 7068292

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Water Europe Director
Durk Krol



On behalf of:



Enclosed:

- Annex 1: EUWA Manifesto

Commissioner Mariya Gabriel
Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth.
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels – Belgium

Brussels, 9th June 2020

Subject: Main priorities for water under the Commission 2019-2024

Dear Commissioner,

For nine consecutive years, the World Economic Forum has ranked water crises as a top global societal risk in terms of impact on every aspect of our lives. The post COVID19 situation in Europe is a wake-up call to switch to a new paradigm in which consideration for water security and risk management are prerequisites.

The EU Water Alliance, composed of a broad range of water-related stakeholders, has therefore addressed key messages to Von der Leyen's Commission (see annex 1). As you are entrusted with the role of Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, water-related challenges have a direct impact on your mission to ensure that education, research and innovation enable society to undertake a successful transition to a climate-neutral economy and new digital age.

You are responsible for a mission of paramount importance: The investment in future generations. By establishing water-related challenges as priorities, the foundations will be laid for the more efficient achievement of Green Deal objectives. The creation of water-related employment provides an opportunity to establish the improved basis for the welfare and employment growth amongst the youth and the more vulnerable sectors of the population. Moreover, the ongoing COVID-19 crisis underlines the importance of the water-health nexus (access to water, WASH, hygiene, drugs and disease monitoring). Even though Coronavirus is easily removed in wastewater treatment plants, wastewater and drinking water treatment plants remain vulnerable places when one is discussing diseases. Research is required so as to be able to better confront possible increasing pressures on water systems.

Therefore, this large coalition of water-related stakeholders kindly requests a meeting with you to discuss these and the following challenges and opportunities. Water is key to the aims of your directorate if it is to have a positive impact on society in Europe and beyond:

- Elevating water to the rank of key topic for Research and Innovation in Horizon Europe work programmes, especially with regards to nature-based solutions, digitalisation and emerging pollution in infrastructures and river basins, thus supporting high standards and innovative approaches and solutions (technological and non-technological). Water-related challenges are key risks for society and Europe should ensure additional investment flows not only in Horizon Europe but also within the skills agenda and additional funds that invest in the future.

- Investing in joint research between key water-use sectors (energy, agriculture, transport, and the environment) from local to global scales. This is an essential step to ensure the success of solutions through the creation of a broad support base representing many sectors of society. To this end, Water-oriented Living Labs (WoLLs) are a powerful collaborative tool to test new solutions and synergies to be applied in a Water Smart Society, in other words, a society in which the true value of water is recognised and comprehended, and all available water sources are managed in such a way that water scarcity and pollution of groundwater are avoided.
- Strengthening the commercial value of innovations in water within and beyond the EU. The quintessential importance of water by guaranteeing a complete innovation value chain covering all technology readiness levels.
- Investing in underpinning research for improved early warning, early action and mitigating solutions regarding water-related risks such as floods, droughts, and water pollution, protecting citizens from these natural hazards.
- Focus on the new generation, placing European youth as an actor of change in the field of water, sustainable development, and the achievement of the Green Deal.
- Implementing improved education with regards to water issues and training in line with the major current challenges, which will not only improve the employability of young people but also enhance their capacity to take action and demonstrate entrepreneurship and leadership.
- Increased inclusion of young water leaders in decision-making processes and a strengthening of mechanisms to better incorporate the voice of young people at all levels. For example, through intra-generational dialogues between decision-makers/experts and young leaders, in order to foster the exchange of experience and the consideration of the needs of youth.
- Access to clean water and sanitation has a transformative effect on the lives of young women because it contributes to women's safety and dignity and engages them in societal activities such as education and employment, improving their lives by empowering them. In general terms, access to water demands a water smart strategy and collaboration to ensure that no sector of the population is excluded.
- Maximising synergies for the issue of water with other European tools such as CAP, FEDER and FEADER. Fostering the creation of new innovative financial mechanisms (EIB) for an innovative water sector strengthening a commercial value for innovation in water. Water-oriented Living Labs can help increase the impact of the directorate's actions in supporting national or regional authorities while also involving citizens and young people.
- Citizen science can help to fill the data gap and improve public awareness and engagement.

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- Methodologies for the dissemination of *fit-for-purpose* funding should and can be adapted.
- The digitalisation of the economy, particularly Artificial Intelligence, is a key challenge for the water sector in order to secure the correct quality and quantity of water for the economy as a whole. This priority will have a substantial impact on the water sector and is expected to greatly support and contribute to the achievement of the EU Green Deal.
- Finally it is recommendable that JRC and WISE platforms also include stimuli aimed towards human capital, namely to ensure the training and availability of the required skilled workforce.

We are determined to form a proactive part of the solution.

Therefore, we look forward to scheduling a meeting to discuss these issues at your earliest convenience. The contact point for further communication is Durk Krol, Water Europe Executive director, durk.krol@watereurope.eu, tel: +32 2 7068292

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Water Europe Director
Durk Krol



On behalf of:



Enclosed:

- Annex 1: EUWA Manifesto

Commissioner Paolo Gentiloni
Economy
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels – Belgium

Brussels, 9th June 2020

Subject: Main priorities for water under the Commission 2019-2024

Dear Commissioner,

For nine consecutive years, the World Economic Forum has ranked water crises as a top global societal risk in terms of impact on every aspect of our lives. The post COVID19 situation in Europe is a wake-up call to switch to a new paradigm in which consideration for water security and risk management are prerequisites.

The EU Water Alliance, composed of a broad range of water-related stakeholders, has therefore addressed key messages to Von der Leyen's Commission (see annex 1). As you are entrusted with the role of Commissioner for the Economy, water-related challenges have a direct impact on your mission regarding taxation and economic affairs.

If solutions to the addressing of water-related challenges are not identified, Europe will suffer from additional extreme events and disease which, in all probability would have a highly negative impact on the economy and thus, create financial instability which in turn would prove detrimental for employment creation, growth and investment.

Therefore, this large coalition of water-related stakeholders kindly request a meeting with you to discuss the following challenges and opportunities. Water is a key element if your directorate is to have a positive impact on society in Europe and beyond:

- Water-related risks represent the principal challenges of the coming decade. To ensure that the economy will remain stable and to guarantee fundamental rights, Europe must ensure the correct implementation and achievement of the UN SDGs. The United Nations throughout the descriptions of the SDGs stress the importance of water when addressing climate change. If high standards are not maintained and if the Water Framework Directive is not fully implemented by Member States, Europe will be not be capable of securing economic stability. The European Semester process and all EU funding programmes could fulfil fundamental roles in the addressing of these challenges, whilst demonstrating how water can contribute to the reduction of pollution emissions.
- The Green Deal and Digitalisation are two priorities which support the achievement of a Water Smart Society¹ and ensure macroeconomic stability. This signifies that investment in hybrid green-grey infrastructure and nature-based solutions is a priority

¹ A society in which the true value of water is recognised and realised, and all available water sources are managed in such a way that water scarcity and pollution of groundwater are avoided, by applying the technological and non-technological innovations.

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capable of mitigating the effects of extreme events. Water-related infrastructures must be adapted to address the issue of emerging pollutants and support an upstream approach in order to make society more resilient to catastrophes caused by water-related risks.

- Lastly, the Energy Taxation Directive provides a positive impetus to encourage green energy in Europe. However, water-related challenges and opportunities must also be considered in order to ensure that the aforementioned Directive plays an appropriate role within the Green deal. Additionally, the *polluter-payer* principle should be fully applied in Europe. The EU Water Alliance thus encourages the directorate you lead to consider the relevance of the water sector for the future of the economy.

We are determined to form a proactive part of the solution.

Therefore, we look forward to scheduling a meeting to discuss these issues at your earliest convenience. The contact point for further communication is Durk Krol, Water Europe Executive director, durk.krol@watereurope.eu, tel: +32 2 7068292.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Water Europe Director
Durk Krol



On behalf of:



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Commissioner Stella Kyriakides
Health
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels – Belgium

Brussels, 9th June 2020

Subject: Main priorities for water under the Commission 2019-2024

Dear Commissioner,

For nine consecutive years, the World Economic Forum has ranked water crises as a top global societal risk in terms of impact on every aspect of our lives. The post COVID19 situation in Europe is a wake-up call to switch to a new paradigm in which consideration for water security and risk management are prerequisites, particularly for health-based challenges.

The EU Water Alliance, composed of a broad range of water-related stakeholders, has therefore addressed key messages to Von der Leyen's Commission (see annex 1).

As you are entrusted with the role of Commissioner for Health, water challenges directly impact your mission to ensure that food in Europe is safe and nutritious and to reduce possible health risks to a minimum.

Therefore, this large coalition of water-related stakeholders kindly requests a meeting with you to discuss a number of challenges and opportunities. Water is a key element for your portfolio which will have an important impact on European society and beyond:

- The opportunity of your missions to encourage an awareness that water is an essential element in the fostering of public health. As the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates, access to clean water and appropriate sanitation including hand washing facilities is essential to combat such crises.
- The Green Deal provides significant opportunities to strengthen the *One Health* approach, enforcing in particular the environmental dimension. Not only with respect to Antimicrobial Resistance but also other emerging pollutants, pathogens, and vector-borne diseases, improving measures that demonstrate a proven positive impact on public health.
- Public health can also greatly benefit from the *Farm-to-Fork* approach within the Green Deal. Each step in the food supply chain is dependent on access to good quality water and our productive agroecosystems require the proper management of used water. As water resources are under pressure, and taking into account *inter alia* the European regulation on water re-use, your active consideration of water-related challenges would prove to be both welcome and much-needed.

- A serious concern is the increasingly high quantity of pharmaceuticals and other organic compounds / micropollutants through residential, industrial, and agricultural wastewaters emitted to the environment that can negatively affect public and environmental health. We would suggest that discussions with inter alia the pharmaceutical industry and water treatment operators should be instigated.
- Smart nature-based solutions can contribute to combating heat stress in cities, but may also play a role in capturing excess water, thereby playing a role in regulating the impacts of droughts and floods on public health, and the prevention of waterborne diseases.
- Beyond the European Union, connecting water management and public health, can lower post-event health impacts of extreme weather (droughts and floods), especially in low and middle income countries. Furthermore, when addressed strategically in the long term, the opportunity for enhanced peace and security in affected regions is increased (e.g. by implementing the UNECE Water & Health protocol. The EU is party to the UNECE). Horizontal coordination between portfolios in this respect is crucial.
- As in all cases we recommend fully inclusive approaches that involve all stakeholders of the Quadruple Helix and which result in the true joint ownership of the solutions. The National Dialogues under the aforementioned UNECE Water & Health protocol set a good example in this sense.
- Lastly, the opportunity offered by Water-oriented Living Labs (WoLLs) to actively support the implementation of the directorate's missions by creating a Water Smart Society, in which the true value of water is both recognised and acted upon, and where by applying both technological and non-technological innovations, all available water sources are managed in such a way that water scarcity and pollution of groundwater are avoided, constitute a powerful tool to increase the impact of the directorate's actions in supporting national or regional authorities.

We are determined to form a proactive part of the solution.

Therefore, we look forward to scheduling a meeting to discuss these issues at your earliest convenience. The contact point for further communication is Durk Krol, Water Europe Executive director, durk.krol@watereurope.eu, tel: +32 2 7068292

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Water Europe Director
Durk Krol



EU Water Alliance

On behalf of:



Enclosed:

- Annex 1: EUWA Manifesto

Commissioner Thierry Breton
Internal Market
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels – Belgium

Brussels, 9th June 2020

Subject: Main priorities for water under the Commission 2019-2024

Dear Commissioner,

For nine consecutive years, the World Economic Forum has ranked water crises as a top global societal risk in terms of impact on every aspect of our lives. The post COVID19 situation in Europe is a wake-up call to switch to a new paradigm in which consideration for water security and risk management are prerequisites.

The EU Water Alliance, composed of a broad range of water-related stakeholders, has therefore addressed key messages to Von der Leyen's Commission (see annex 1). You are entrusted with the role of Commissioner for the Internal Market to establish a framework which will permit Europe to benefit from the digital transition and guarantee that our industry is prepared to face, with confidence, water-related challenges which directly impact your mission due to the fact that, if not addressed, they may reduce the resilience of our industry.

Therefore, this broad coalition of water-related stakeholders kindly requests a meeting with you to discuss a number of challenges and opportunities. Water is a key element within your portfolio that specifically has an impact on society in Europe and beyond:

- The central challenge that water-related risks represent in this decade for industrial strategy, food security, the restoration of biodiversity and attempts to achieve a zero-pollution and carbon neutral, renewable energy-based society. Many opportunities lie ahead to enable the integration of sustainable and circular economy solutions within industrial practices, thus resulting in a long-term sustainable approach.
- The opportunity offered by the Green Deal to promote the visibility of water-related challenges and eliminate the silo-approach by presenting a full picture of their connections to health, education, sustainable economic development, industry, innovation, security, digitalisation, gender equality, agriculture and oceans, to name but a few examples. By investing in a European Water Smart Society, Europe will contribute to ensuring the resilience of both SMEs and industry whilst fostering the single market.

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- The key role of economy digitalisation and particularly of A.I., in securing the necessary quality and quantity of water for the economy as a whole. Digitalisation will have an immense impact on the water sector and is expected to greatly support and contribute to the achievement of the EU Green Deal.

We are determined to form a proactive part of the solution.

Therefore, we look forward to scheduling a meeting to discuss these issues at your earliest convenience. The contact point for further communication is Durk Krol, Water Europe Executive director, durk.krol@watereurope.eu, tel: +32 2 7068292

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Water Europe Director
Durk Krol



On behalf of:



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Commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis
Executive Vice-President
An Economy that Works for People
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels – Belgium

Brussels, 9th June 2020

Subject: Main priorities for water under the Commission 2019-2024

Dear Executive Vice-President,

For nine consecutive years, the World Economic Forum has ranked water crises as a top global societal risk in terms of impact on every aspect of our lives. The post COVID19 situation in Europe is a wake-up call to switch to a new paradigm in which consideration for water security and risk management are prerequisites.

The EU Water Alliance, composed of a broad range of water-related stakeholders, has therefore addressed key messages to Von der Leyen's Commission (see annex 1). As you are entrusted with the role of Executive Vice-President for an Economy that Works for People, the water-related challenges directly related to many economic objectives heavily impact your mission. Failure to find solutions to water-related challenges, will signify that Europe will suffer from additional extreme events and disease which could have an important negative impact on our economy, subsequently creating financial instability.

Therefore, this broad coalition of water-related stakeholders kindly requests a meeting with you to discuss a number of challenges and opportunities. Water is a key element within your portfolio that specifically has an impact on European society and beyond:

- The opportunity of transitioning towards water-smart business models: Even though almost all responding companies of the 183 European businesses reporting on water in 2018¹ have set some sort of water-related target and goal, these do not establish specific objectives that would directly contribute to more system-wide water ambitions. There is much to be gained by helping companies to better align their water strategies with the European and Global Water Agenda whilst providing good water stewardship by means of adequate green taxation which supports innovative as well as sustainable water organisations.
- The development of sustainable finance: Banks and institutional investors impact the ways in which businesses affect freshwater resources. However, the lack of water risk awareness signifies that banks often fail to account for water security risks. In the

¹ <https://bit.ly/31UpW5M>

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absence of effective global corporate governance, commercial banks and their institutional investors can offer unique incentives for change by ensuring that their investment and lending practices drive improvements in water security².

We are determined to form a proactive part of the solution.

Therefore, we look forward to scheduling a meeting to discuss these issues at your earliest convenience. The contact point for further communication is Durk Krol, Water Europe Executive director, durk.krol@watereurope.eu, tel: +32 2 7068292

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Water Europe Director
Durk Krol



On behalf of:



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² <https://www.ebf.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Banking-in-Europe-2018-EBF-Facts-and-Figures.pdf>

Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius
Environment, Oceans and Fisheries.
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels – Belgium

Brussels, 9th June 2020

Subject: Main priorities for water under the Commission 2019-2024

Dear Commissioner,

For nine consecutive years, the World Economic Forum has ranked water crises as a top global societal risk in terms of impact on every aspect of our lives. The post COVID19 situation in Europe is a wake-up call to switch to a new paradigm in which consideration for water security and risk management are prerequisites.

The EU Water Alliance, composed of a broad range of water-related stakeholders, has therefore addressed key messages to Von der Leyen's Commission (see annex 1). As you are entrusted with the role of Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, the issue of water has a direct impact on your mission to enable citizens to live well based on a sustainable and innovative economy and to enhance society's resilience, resource efficiency and respect of biodiversity.

Therefore, this large coalition of water-related stakeholders kindly requests a meeting with you to discuss the following points of interest:

- The opportunity of the Green Deal to make water-related challenges truly visible and to break the silo-approach by establishing a clear picture of the connections between water and health, education, economic development, innovation, security, digitalisation, gender equality, agriculture and oceans, (with regards to the latter in order to specifically contribute to a sustainable fisheries policy). The European Semester process and all EU funding programmes could fulfil fundamental roles in the addressing of these challenges, whilst demonstrating how water can contribute to the reduction of pollution emissions.
- The need for an inclusive and systemic approach with regards to all relevant EU policies in order to reinforce the resilience of our ecosystems and society, particularly through the conservation of peatlands or the development of nature-based solutions as a carbon storage tool.
- The need for inclusive governance with the full value chain, including NGOs, CSOs, local authorities, businesses, water users, citizens with specific emphasise on the involvement of youth and women encompassing the full diversity of the

aforementioned sectors in order to integrate water as a central issue with the creation and implementation of initiatives designed to achieve the carbon-neutral objective of the Green Deal. Tools such as water stewardship may be of great use but require high-profile promotion to be become known and be employed.

- The full implementation of Europe's ambitious legislation regarding inland water is indispensable to achieve climate neutral ambitions. A circular economy approach and the reuse of water should be encouraged in all activities aimed at reducing pressure on groundwater resources and protecting aquatic biodiversity especially in inland waters. Pollution (pathogens) in runoff and wastewater, particularly in urbanised areas, must be tackled at its source and substances and energy must be extracted as much as possible in order to fully exploit the value in water.
- Education regarding water and training in line with the major current challenges can support green jobs, entrepreneurship, and leadership, particularly when one considers youth and women. For instance, intra-generational dialogues between decision-makers/experts and young leaders, can contribute to the fostering of the exchange of experience and the consideration of priorities as discerned from the perspective of the younger generations.
- The EU/EC is capable of undertaking a vital (horizontal coordination) role in connecting fresh water and maritime issues including that of fishery. Currently however such a mechanism within the EC/EU does not exist and it is mere coincidence if the responsible civil servants in member states are identifying such links. Therefore, one must ask, 'How can this dialogue be enhanced?'.
- Tackling issues such as *the plastic soup* should be a joint effort undertaken by both fresh and saltwater organisations whilst also involving businesses that understand the link.

We are determined to form a proactive part of the solution.

Therefore, we look forward to scheduling a meeting to discuss these issues at your earliest convenience. The contact point for further communication is Durk Krol, Water Europe Executive director, durk.krol@watereurope.eu, tel: +32 2 7068292

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Water Europe Director
Durk Krol



EU Water Alliance

On behalf of:



Enclosed:

- Annex 1: EUWA Manifesto

Commissioner Adina Vălean
Transports
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels – Belgium

Brussels, 9th June 2020

Subject: Main priorities for water under the Commission 2019-2024

Dear Commissioner,

For nine consecutive years, the World Economic Forum has ranked water crises as a top global societal risk in terms of impact on every aspect of our lives. The post COVID19 situation in Europe is a wake-up call to switch to a new paradigm in which consideration for water security and risk management are prerequisites.

The EU Water Alliance, composed of a broad range of water-related stakeholders, has therefore addressed key messages to Von der Leyen's Commission (see annex 1). As you are entrusted with the role of Commissioner for Transport, water challenges directly impact your mission to create sustainable and smart mobility in Europe.

If the finding of solutions to address water-related challenges is not established as a priority, Europe will suffer from additional extreme events such as drought-induced shipping disruption which can impact the EU's mobility and the objectives regarding the reduction of pollution. **Therefore, this large coalition of water-related stakeholders kindly request a meeting with you to discuss the following points of interest:**

- The anticipated increase in waterborne transport should be considered as an opportunity to redevelop waterways sustainably, contributing to the ambition of the European Commissions to meet environmental targets, in particular with regards to biodiversity. The aim concerning the restoration of the natural functions of ground and surface waters in order to preserve and restore biodiversity in lakes, rivers, wetlands and estuaries should be fully integrated with the desire to increase inland waterborne transport in order to reduce overall transport-based greenhouse gas emissions.
- Water-related risks represent one of the principal issues of the decade. The increase of pollution in our waters also constitutes a key challenge as do the emissions caused by transport in general. We would suggest, therefore, that the EU should support investment in technological and non-technological research and innovation to identify and overcome increased pollution due to inland water transport, but that also resulting from road transport. Developing and implementing a zero-pollution strategy by controlling pollution at source is, in the opinion of this coalition, constitutes an important aspect of the tasks outlined within your portfolio.
- Applying an Integrated Water Resources Management approach to address the needs of the transport, environmental and other sectors could greatly contribute to the improvement and

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maintenance of surface waters, providing sufficient water resources for all depending sectors, both in quantity and quality.

- Furthermore, the digitalisation of transport will prove to be a pivotal aspect within the modernisation of transport systems, and those actions aimed at ensuring quality water for all economy activities. This priority will have a substantial impact on the water sector and is expected to contribute by no small means to the achievement of the EU Green Deal. The EU Water Alliance would therefore like to encourage the directorate for which you are responsible to fully consider the issues at hand and to work towards a decrease of the environmental impact of transport on waterways.

We firmly believe in fully inclusive approaches that involve all stakeholders and create a proactive joint ownership of the implemented solutions.

We are determined to form a proactive part of the solution.

Therefore, we look forward to scheduling a meeting to discuss these issues at your earliest convenience. The contact point for further communication is Durk Krol, Water Europe Executive director, durk.krol@watereurope.eu, tel: +32 2 7068292

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Water Europe Director
Durk Krol



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Commissioner Dubravka Šuica
Vice-President
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels – Belgium

Brussels, 9th June 2020

Subject: Main priorities for water under the Commission 2019-2024

Dear Commissioner,

For nine consecutive years, the World Economic Forum has ranked water crises as a top global societal risk in terms of impact on every aspect of our lives. The post COVID19 situation in Europe is a wake-up call to switch to a new paradigm in which consideration for water security and risk management are prerequisites.

The EU Water Alliance, composed of a broad range of water-related stakeholders, has therefore addressed key messages to Von der Leyen's Commission (see annex 1). As you are entrusted with the role of Vice-President for Democracy and Demography, water challenges have a direct impact on your mission to coordinate the long-term vision for rural areas, the participation of citizens and actions regarding the youth of Europe.

Therefore, this large coalition of water-related stakeholders kindly requests a meeting with you to discuss the following points of interest related to your portfolio and which would result in positive impacts both in Europe and beyond:

- Promoting and ensuring inclusive, multi-stakeholder water governance throughout Europe, in line with the *inter alia* principles of the Water Framework Directive, facilitating and allowing the meaningful participation of all water stakeholders, especially citizens, civil society organisations including youth and women representative groups in all their diversity, both in the monitoring of water and sanitation services in the broadest sense and in policy making. Citizens science could play an excellent supporting role here. The rural Water oriented Living Labs (WoLLs) provide an opportunity to maximise the efforts of your directorate to increase citizen participation in the water sector.
- Investing in innovative water supply solutions in order to provide safe drinking water and sanitation to (isolated) rural areas and thus reduce the social divide between urban and rural areas as well as prevention of the desertification of these areas.
- Fit-for-purpose financing also directly benefitting the local groups and appropriate, affordable and manageable technology combined with vocational training for women and youth to give access to water-related jobs could signify an important difference.
- Support the innovative potential of young water leaders to commit themselves to their communities and propose innovative solutions in the field of water and sanitation by providing them with the necessary tools (training, mentoring, grants) to boost their

employability and career development. To ensure the achievement of the SDGs and especially SDG6, new human resources are urgently required. Improved support for young professionals at the local level will also reduce the risk of *brain drain*. As in all cases we would recommend fully inclusive approaches that involve all stakeholders and lead to the joint ownership of the solutions. Creating improved mechanisms for discussions with the relevant groups and local government agencies involved in order to design more efficient engagement procedures would be highly recommendable.

We are determined to form a proactive part of the solution.

Therefore, we look forward to scheduling a meeting to discuss these issues at your earliest convenience. The contact point for further communication is Durk Krol, Water Europe Executive director, durk.krol@watereurope.eu, tel: +32 2 7068292

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Water Europe Director
Durk Krol



On behalf of:



Enclosed:

- Annex 1: EUWA Manifesto

Commissioner Elisa Ferreira
Cohesion and Reforms
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels – Belgium

Brussels, 9th June 2020

Subject: Main priorities for water under the Commission 2019-2024

Dear Commissioner,

For nine consecutive years, the World Economic Forum has ranked water crises as a top global societal risk in terms of impact on every aspect of our lives. The post COVID19 situation in Europe is a wake-up call to switch to a new paradigm in which consideration for water security and risk management are prerequisites.

The EU Water Alliance, composed of a broad range of water-related stakeholders, has therefore addressed key messages to Von der Leyen's Commission (see annex 1). As you are entrusted with the role of Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms, water-related challenges directly impact on your mission to ensure that Europe invests and supports the regions and the people ensuring that no-one is forgotten within the process of digitalisation and climate transition in Europe.

Therefore, this large coalition of water-related stakeholders kindly requests a meeting with you to discuss a number of challenges and opportunities. Water is a key element within your portfolio that will have an important impact on European society and beyond:

- The Green Deal is an opportunity to underline the importance of water-related challenges. Investments is necessary in order to ensure a smooth and effective transition that includes all social groups. Convergence, climate change and digitalisation of Europe cannot be achieved without investment employing transition funds justly allocated, in line with European priorities such as the Green Deal and the UN SDGs. Emerging and diffuse pollution impacts not only our rural areas and food systems but also cities, especially if one takes into account extreme events and the low quality of WASH services. The digitalisation of water provides information which is key to the maintaining of Europe as a frontrunner when addressing diffuse pollution in urban areas. The zero-pollution strategy through the controlling of pollution at source is therefore an extremely welcome measure.
- To overcome the risk of climate transition, with an effective circular economy for the EU regions, the European Commission should consider initiating and engaging in a truly meaningful dialogue with citizens regarding water, sanitation and hygiene services and the restoration of biodiversity priorities. This objective requires the raising of awareness and a dialogue with people on the ground. At present, the EU climate pact

EU Water Alliance

has omitted to include water-related challenges with the inherent risk that this entails. The non-inclusion of a key resource for society and the unfamiliarity with the related issues on the part of an important proportion of society, as a whole, constitutes an important obstacle to the achievement of an effective transition to a digitalised and sustainable Europe.

- The creation of Water oriented Living Labs (WoLLs) to promote a Water Smart Society, in which the true value of water is both recognised and acted upon, and where by applying both technological and non-technological innovations, all available water sources are managed in such a way that water scarcity and pollution of groundwater are avoided, constitute a powerful tool to increase the impact of the directorate's actions in supporting regions and authorities and engaging with citizens in order to determine the correct manner to provide both investment and non-financial support.

We are determined to form a proactive part of the solution.

Therefore, we look forward to scheduling a meeting to discuss these issues at your earliest convenience. The contact point for further communication is Durk Krol, Water Europe Executive director, durk.krol@watereurope.eu, tel: +32 2 7068292

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Water Europe Director
Durk Krol



On behalf of:



Enclosed:

- Annex 1: EUWA Manifesto

Commissioner Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels – Belgium

Brussels, 9th June 2020

Subject: Main priorities for water under the Commission 2019-2024

Dear Commissioner,

For nine consecutive years, the World Economic Forum has ranked water crises as a top global societal risk in terms of impact on every aspect of our lives. The post COVID19 situation in Europe is a wake-up call to switch to a new paradigm in which consideration for water security and risk management are prerequisites.

The EU Water Alliance, composed of a broad range of water-related stakeholders, has therefore addressed key messages to Von der Leyen's Commission (see annex 1). As you are entrusted with the role of Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal, water challenges have a direct impact on your mission to tackle climate change in each EU policy and reduce the EU's vulnerability to climate change.

Therefore, this large coalition of water-related stakeholders kindly requests a meeting with you to discuss the following points of interests related to your portfolio which intends to implement the Green Deal and have a positive impact on society in Europe and beyond:

- The opportunity of the Green Deal to make water-related challenges truly visible and to dismantle the silo-approach by establishing a clear picture of the connections between water and health, education, economic development, innovation, security, digitalisation, gender equality, agriculture and oceans. The European Semester process and all EU funding programmes could fulfil fundamental roles in the addressing of these challenges, whilst demonstrating how water can contribute to the reduction of pollution emissions. Campaigns such as *ClimateIsWater* would assist in this task.
- The need for an inclusive and systemic approach with regards to all relevant EU policies in order to reinforce the resilience of our ecosystems and society, particularly through the conservation of peatlands or the development of Nature-Based Solutions to address climate and water challenges and to reduce vulnerability.
- The need for inclusive governance with the full value chain, including NGOs, CSOs, local authorities, businesses, water users, citizens with specific emphasise on the

involvement of youth and women encompassing the full diversity of the aforementioned sectors in order to integrate water as a central issue with the creation and implementation of initiatives designed to achieve the carbon-neutral objective of the Green Deal.

- Reinforce the role of Europe at international climate negotiations by including and promoting the relevance of water and sanitation as described in UN SDG 6 (including WASH services and the restoration of ecosystems and biodiversity in order to achieve other SDGs).
- Education regarding water and vocational training designed to address the major current challenges would support the creation of green employment, entrepreneurship, and leadership, particularly in the case of youths and women. In addition, intra-generational dialogues between decision-makers/experts and young leaders, would contribute to the fostering of experience and knowledge exchange and the consideration of priorities as discerned from the perspective of the younger generations.
- Enhance the dialogue already established with organisations such as SDGWatch and ensure that organisations representing the water and sanitation sectors form part of said dialogue. Discuss how available funding can be made more *fit-for-purpose* and diminish present bureaucratic criteria so that more entities feel themselves capable of applying for and receiving support within frameworks such as LIFE+.
- Discuss how cross-issue and cross-sector mechanisms can be created so that all stakeholders may be involved and their roles in the relevant preparatory and implementation stages of initiatives enhanced even if, to date, they do not feature in the Transparency Register.

We are determined to form a proactive part of the solution.

Therefore, we look forward to scheduling a meeting to discuss these issues at your earliest convenience. The contact point for further communication is Durk Krol, Water Europe Executive director, durk.krol@watereurope.eu, tel: +32 2 7068292

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Water Europe Director
Durk Krol



On behalf of:



Enclosed:

- Annex 1: EUWA Manifesto

Commissioner Helena Dalli
Equality
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels – Belgium

Brussels, 9th June 2020

Subject: Main priorities for water under the Commission 2019-2024

Dear Commissioner,

For nine consecutive years, the World Economic Forum has ranked water crises as a top global societal risk in terms of impact on every aspect of our lives. The post COVID19 situation in Europe is a wake-up call to switch to a new paradigm in which consideration for water security and risk management are prerequisites.

The EU Water Alliance, composed of a broad range of water-related stakeholders, has therefore addressed key messages to Von der Leyen's Commission (see annex 1). As you are entrusted with the role of Commissioner for Equality, the water-related challenges directly impact on your mission to strengthen inclusion and equality in Europe and beyond.

Therefore, this broad coalition of water-related stakeholders kindly requests a meeting with you to discuss a number of challenges and opportunities. Water is a key element for your portfolio that has a specific impact on society in Europe and beyond:

- Water-related risks constitute the principal challenges of the coming decade. In Europe, the consequences of climate change are becoming more visible every year, encapsulating severe implications for the lives of the most vulnerable citizens (children and older people). In order to assume the leading role in sustainable development, we believe that the European Commission will have to establish water, sanitation and hygiene services and the restoration of biodiversity as priorities within the EU international agenda, supporting investment and raising the importance of water in order to achieve the UN SDGs. The WASH sector shows huge potential as a contributor to prosperity, given that two thirds of world employment is dependent on water.¹ WASH is also a key determining factor in the pursuit of overall sustainable human development.
- Furthermore, access to WASH has a transformative effect, especially with regards to the lives of women and girls. Women and girls face the risk of abuse and sexual assault

¹ 2016 UN World Water Development Report, Water and Jobs, <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/water/wwap/wwdr/2016-water-and-jobs/>

EU Water Alliance

when fetching water. In the case of women with disabilities or elderly women, inadequate access to water is an equally important obstacle. The elimination of the burden of fetching water contributes to the safety and dignity of women whilst permitting them to engage in societal activities such as education and work, thus ostensibly improving their lives by increased social empowerment.

- Investment in a Water Smart Society further ensures that EU development programmes aimed at supporting vocational training in the water sector are also accessible and targeted to women so that they may be better represented in professions such as plumbing or hydrology.

We are determined to form a proactive part of the solution.

Therefore, we look forward to scheduling a meeting to discuss these issues at your earliest convenience. The contact point for further communication is Durk Krol, Water Europe Executive director, durk.krol@watereurope.eu, tel: +32 2 7068292

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Water Europe Director
Durk Krol



On behalf of:



Enclosed:

- Annex 1: EUWA Manifesto

Commissioner Janez Lenarčič
Crisis Management
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels – Belgium

Brussels, 9th June 2020

Subject: Main priorities for water under the Commission 2019-2024

Dear Commissioner,

For nine consecutive years, the World Economic Forum has ranked water crises as a top global societal risk in terms of impact on every aspect of our lives. The post COVID19 situation in Europe is a wake-up call to switch to a new paradigm in which consideration for water security and risk management are prerequisites.

The EU Water Alliance, composed of a broad range of water-related stakeholders, has therefore addressed key messages to Von der Leyen's Commission (see annex 1). As you are entrusted with the role of Commissioner for Crisis Management to ensure civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, water-related challenges are of interest to your directorate, being as they are, important factors in the provision of long-term solutions and the addressing of the challenges posed by climate change.

Therefore, this large coalition of water-related stakeholders kindly requests a meeting with you to discuss the following points of interests, which accordance with your portfolio are capable of having an impact on society in Europe and beyond:

- Access to water and sanitation are a human right and have a direct impact on social and economic development, especially so when addressing subjects such as sanitation conditions, health and food. By providing water to all and by protecting and restoring freshwater ecosystems such as wetlands, Europe will be better prepared to prevent and react to water-related emergencies such as flooding, droughts or diffuse pollution.
- Water-related risks, many of them closely related to sanitation represent the principal challenges of the decade. These are risks which directly affect food safety and security, water security, waterborne-diseases and the solutions for them – such as the current COVID-19 pandemic - and extreme environmental events. As a result, any health, disaster, climate policy or strategy has to carefully consider water issues within a holistic approach. There exists a unique opportunity to ensure that water-related challenges become visible and to dismantle the silo-approach presenting a global picture of the connections between water and health, innovation, security and economic development. By investing in a Water Smart Society, Europe will contribute to the reduction of negative environmental, material, economic and health factors, thus reducing the risk to all citizens.

- Many crises worldwide originate from water hazards: too much water due to floods, too little water during droughts or excessive water pollution. Preventing such emergencies requires the integration of ecosystems and Nature Based Solutions (NBS) within national strategies and plans for disaster risk reduction and resilience building. In the light of climate change and disaster management, this encompasses increasing the resilience to water-related hazards of the potentially most affected communities, counteracting migration drivers or mitigating and adapting to them. In times of crisis, water supply and sanitation are a primary concern. Preparation for moment in which utility services are interrupted is key to disaster management. Plans for immediate responses, as well as recovery and reconstruction mechanisms, need to be in place.
- Humanitarian aid strategies and packages and the way that such measures may lay the foundations for restoration and re-development require a fundamental understanding of the key role that access to water and sanitation play. Basic services of WASH (including wastewater treatment) are fundamental during disasters, in displaced people's camps and other extreme situations. The EU has experience of acting as hosting countries and understands the pressure of a sudden increase in demand regarding its infrastructures. The question as to how to establish efficient, but flexible long-term planning which answers the needs of the people affected and the nation states who must answer such needs is one that must be answered clearly and carefully.
- Therefore, it is not unreasonable to state that the EU should support investment in technological and non-technological research and innovation aimed at identifying and preventing risks in water-related infrastructures not only in Europe but also beyond. This research is also key to maintain Europe as a frontrunner in the mitigation and adaptation to Climate Change, in no small measure thanks to the application of nature-based solutions.
- In order to address environmental threats it is also essential to develop disaster risk strategies and to improve access to early warning systems that will permit the EU to respond effectively prevent so far as is possible risks identified within policies related to water diplomacy.
- Water and sanitation can no longer be considered as secondary factors. On the contrary they are sectors which require a presence at the forefront of policy-making procedures responsible for determining future investment criteria.
- As in all cases we would recommend fully inclusive approaches that involve all stakeholders and lead to the joint ownership of the solutions.

We are determined to form a proactive part of the solution.

Therefore, we look forward to scheduling a meeting to discuss these issues at your earliest convenience. The contact point for further communication is Durk Krol, Water Europe Executive director, durk.krol@watereurope.eu, tel: +32 2 7068292

EU Water Alliance

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Water Europe Director
Durk Krol



On behalf of:



Enclosed:

- Annex 1: EUWA Manifesto

Commissioner Janusz Wojciechowski
Agriculture
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels – Belgium

Brussels, 9th June 2020

Subject: Main priorities for water under the Commission 2019-2024

Dear Commissioner,

For nine consecutive years, the World Economic Forum has ranked water crises as a top global societal risk in terms of impact on every aspect of our lives. The post COVID19 situation in Europe is a wake-up call to switch to a new paradigm in which consideration for water security and risk management are prerequisites.

The EU Water Alliance, composed of a broad range of water-related stakeholders, has therefore addressed key messages to Von der Leyen's Commission (annex 1). As you are entrusted with the role of Commissioner for Agriculture, water challenges have a direct impact on your mission to ensure a modern and sustainable EU agricultural sector that adapts to climate changes.

Agricultural production both contributes to climate change and is affected by climate change. Water pollution from agriculture and extreme climate events such as floods and droughts affect both water and food production security and constitute the main threats for future agricultural activity.

Moreover, the strong connections with the other plans and strategies of the EU demonstrates the importance of considering water as a common denominator in order to ensure that the Green Deal is successful and capable of addressing global water scarcity and crisis. **Therefore, this large coalition of water-related stakeholders kindly requests a meeting with you to discuss the *Farm to fork* strategy within the context of the following points of interest:**

- The reduction of water pollution along the entire production, processing and consumption chain. The increase of pollution presents a key challenge, as it poses possible risks to our food safety and health.
- The rationalisation and reduction of freshwater consumption, particularly by boosting water recycling/reuse/cascading/symbiosis, the promoting of the digitalisation of water and synergies between rural, urban and industrial areas, especially when addressing the issue of water scarcity. Water efficiency contributes to water security by reducing dependence on the water source.
- The protection of freshwater ecosystems such as peatlands against drainage. The restoration of peatlands contributes to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions

through adapted drainage systems and the development of Nature-Based Solutions such as permaculture and wet farming on organic peat soils.

- In compliance with the Water Framework Directive, it is important to encourage an inclusive dialogue with stakeholders from outside the agricultural sector, to adapt and improve water governance, infrastructures and systems to climate change and to create a systemic management and decision-making process for resilience.
- Water-oriented Living Labs could be an effective instrument for the achievement of a Water Smart Society.

We are determined to form a proactive part of the solution.

Therefore, we look forward to scheduling a meeting to discuss these issues at your earliest convenience. The contact point for further communication is Durk Krol, Water Europe Executive director, durk.krol@watereurope.eu, tel: +32 2 7068292

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Water Europe Director
Durk Krol



On behalf of:



Enclosed:

- Annex 1: EUWA Manifesto

Commissioner Jutta Urpilainen
International Partnership
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels – Belgium

Brussels, 9th June 2020

Subject: Main priorities for water under the Commission 2019-2024

Dear Commissioner,

For nine consecutive years, the World Economic Forum has ranked water crises as a top global societal risk in terms of impact on every aspect of our lives. The post COVID19 situation in Europe is a wake-up call to switch to a new paradigm in which consideration for water security and risk management are prerequisites.

The EU Water Alliance, composed of a wide range of water-related stakeholders, has therefore addressed key messages to Von der Leyen's Commission (see annex 1). As you are entrusted with the role of Commissioner for International Partnerships, water-related challenges have a direct impact regarding the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals and hence your mission.

Therefore, this broad coalition of water-related stakeholders kindly request a meeting with you to discuss the following points of interest related to your mission:

- Access to water and sanitation are human rights and have a direct impact on social and economic development, regional stability and security, and equality. This is especially so when one considers sanitation conditions, health and food. SDG 6 constitutes an important set of targets in order to guarantee such rights. This access is particularly fundamental in humanitarian aid strategies during disasters, in displaced people's camps and other extreme situations. The question as to how to establish efficient, but flexible long-term planning which answers the needs of the people affected and the nation states who must answer such needs is one that must be answered clearly and carefully.
- Water-related risks are some of the principal challenges of the decade. To assume the leading role in sustainable development, the European Commission must recognise water, sanitation and hygiene services and the restoration of biodiversity as priorities within the EU International Agenda, supporting investment and underlining the importance of water if one seeks to achieve the other UN SDGs.
- Access to WASH has a transformative effect particularly on the lives of women and girls. Removing the burden of fetching water contributes to their safety, dignity and permits them the increased opportunity of engaging in activities such as education and work, thus improving their lives. The access to WASH is key to the combating of

diseases such as the current COVID-19 pandemic, which may well last several years until vaccines are sufficiently disseminated. Europe cannot be in the vanguard of sustainable development and international cooperation if it does not attach the maximum importance to the issues of access to clean water and sanitation for all.

- The EU should support *fit-for-purpose* investment in technological and non-technological research and innovation to identify risks and enable more innovative and integrated solutions such as blue-green infrastructures and optimised initiatives regarding water governance. Research is also key to maintaining Europe at the forefront of the prevention and adaptation to Climate Change. The addressing of environmental threats implicitly demands the fostering of the design and implementation of the EU's development and cooperation instruments. What is required is the adoption of integrated risk reduction, climate change adaptation, mitigation and sustainable development programmes, with ecosystems such as wetlands/ peatlands at the heart, from the local level through to surrounding territories or watersheds.
- Support of capacity development actions including vocational training for water management constitutes a key measure to achieve EU objectives. In doing this, it is advisable that the EU cooperates with existing international platforms and initiatives such as the Global Water Operators Partnership (GWOPA) led by UN Habitat, other UN entities and overseas counterparts such as AMCOW.
- Prevent social exclusion for many young people, male and female, by ensuring universal access to safe drinking water and sanitation. The lack of basic services to support themselves and their families both for domestic and productive uses, often leads to internal displacement, potential delinquency or worse. The demography of developing countries is characterised by its youth, and young people must therefore constitute a priority target for the European Union's development policies. Access to water and to water-based employment can and indeed does make a significant difference.
- Supporting innovative ways and tools to foster community-led water solutions fit for purpose and to scale in order to ensure more democratic water governance in developing countries and as well as more transparency and political accountability. Fit-for-purpose funding mechanisms are crucial and require more creative solutions to reach actors on the ground like women and youth groups.
- Fully inclusive approaches that involve all stakeholders and lead to the joint ownership of solutions are important. A discussion concerning the re-instatement of a multi-stakeholder platform to jointly examine and enhance interventions regarding water-related issues (SDG6) and development cooperation would be highly desirable.

We are determined to form a proactive part of the solution.

Therefore, we look forward to scheduling a meeting to discuss these issues at your earliest convenience. The contact point for further communication is Durk Krol, Water Europe Executive director, durk.krol@watereurope.eu, tel: +32 2 7068292

EU Water Alliance

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Water Europe Director
Durk Krol



On behalf of:



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