

The French Water Partnership's water & SDGs news digest



*A quarterly update on the topic of water and Sustainable Development Goals
by Melisa Cran, deputy director and coordinator of the SDGs working group at the French Water Partnership*

2018 – YEAR OF THE SDG ON WATER & SANITATION

The High-level Political Forum is an annual United Nations meeting to take stock of the progress made on SDGs. Every year, five or six SDGs are analyzed in detail, and this year one of them is SDG6. We can therefore expect an eventful year from the water community. Numerous international initiatives are set to take place from now to July 2018:

- Official launch in March 2018 of the United Nations resolution: “International Decade (2018 – 2028) for action – Water for Sustainable Development”;
- Publication of a UN-Water report on SDG6;
- A study by End Water Poverty and the Dutch partnership Watershed on SDG6 accountability mechanisms applied to national governments, based on case studies in 30 countries including France.

The French government will present its traditional annual status report on SDGs, this time with a more detailed focus on SDG6.

FRENCH SDG ROADMAP STILL IN THE PIPELINE

Despite being announced several times, the national SDG roadmap has still not been published. Is the delay due to a lack of political support at the top? Or a political focus on climate change that works to the detriment of other environmental themes? Numerous speculations have been made to explain the hold-up. Yet the roadmap is absolutely vital as a shared tool to facilitate the move to sustainable development around a common project. Players on the French field still know very little about SDGs.

The greatest awareness of the Goals tends to be in the field of international solidarity. SDGs are to some extent a continuation of the Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015 framework for projects to aid international development) and so the MDG-SDG transition seems to have been assimilated by NGOs, funding partners and international cooperation stakeholders. On 25 February, Coalition Eau organized an SDG training day for its member NGOs; AFD has totally reworked its priorities around SDGs; and the Burgundy-Franche-Comté region is making SDGs the theme of its regional conferences on cooperation and international solidarity.

Other French stakeholders, including local decision-makers (municipalities, companies, farmers, etc.) currently seem to be less familiar with SDGs, despite the fact that they concern every sector, are based on the three pillars of *economics – society – environment*, and firmly apply to the national territory. Stronger efforts are therefore needed to convince these parties to accelerate their transition towards sustainable development by using the SDG “tool kit”. Fortunately, networks are already active: Comité 21, Coordination Sud, 4D, the FWP, etc. Other significant progress includes Coordination Sud’s recent publication of its [recommendations to members of parliament](#) for easier implementation of SDGs on the national territory.

THE WATER CONFERENCES, AN OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE AWARENESS OF SDGs

Following the latest Mayors’ Congress, the French President announced a major national consultation on water management in 2018. This will be the perfect occasion to raise awareness and link up national issues to Sustainable Development Goals.

CICID: GOOD MOVE FOR SDGs; VIGILANCE FOR WATER

