



Declaration of Commitments

by the organizing members of
“The United Nations of Rivers, Deltas and Estuaries”
contributing to the UN 2023 Water Conference in New York

We, the organizing members of the UN of Rivers, Deltas and Estuaries working in the fields of water, nature, culture, heritage, sustainable development, and design gathered in Philadelphia and New York between 17th and 24th of March, 2023 are convinced - together with our partners - that we need to go beyond the current asset-oriented approach to river and waterbody management to include socio-spatial, ecological and cultural approaches that include long-term and process-based perspectives connecting the past with the present and the future. We are facing multiple global tipping points; we need to find short-term solutions while embracing adaptive strategies. Targeted exploration and understanding of traditional ecological knowledge, practices and spaces, will be enhanced, transformed and partially preserved to achieve the SDGs and sustainable long-term ecosystems.

As the initiating group of the UN of Rivers, Deltas and Estuaries, we commit to activating synergies among UNESCO Chair holders, institutions, activities and anyone wants to join, including scholars and practitioners, minority groups from the majority world, indigenous people, etc. Our aim is to connect and engage with academics, practitioners, policy makers, artists, activists and professionals of all ages and backgrounds to form a network. We will assess and revise the commitments annually with all participating partners.

Our core commitments

- Building a broad integrative community
- Providing open access to practices, methodologies, and data
- Co-implementing demonstration actions
- Fostering new frameworks
- Co-development of didactic materials
- Collaborating actions in support of leading policy making



Building a broad, integrative community

1. **Building community** of practice
2. Reaching **500 million people** through WAMU Network
3. Holding **yearly online/hybrid gatherings**
4. Gatherings for **policy makers and artists**
5. **Acknowledging water cultures**

Providing open access to practices, methodologies, and data

6. Maintaining **online open access dissemination platform** (Bluepapers.nl)
7. Providing **didactic materials**
8. **Organizing webinars**
9. Promoting **international questionnaire**
10. Promoting **informal education and lifelong learning**

Co-implementing demonstration actions

11. Establish **global studies series** with **policy advice**
12. Implementing the WIN
13. Promoting **tangible and sensory perspectives**
14. Give momentum to existing initiatives

Fostering new frameworks

15. Exploring **shared thematic foci or places**
16. **Developing methods of analysis and collaborative practice**
17. Establish **typology of social and cultural practices** compatible with Ramsar
18. Identifying **demonstration sites**

Co-development of didactic materials

19. **Implementing the WIN methodology**
20. Refining **mapping and digital tools**
21. **Establishing UNESCO Chair network on Water, Culture, Nature, Heritage, and Design**
22. **Clarifying language and vocabulary in communication**
23. Drinkable Rivers **book with practical guide**

Collaborating actions in support of leading policy making

24. **Competitive grants**
25. **Advance public engagement**
26. **Promote regional initiatives**
27. Facilitate **interaction between local communities**
28. Promote **intergenerational dialogue**



Full name(s) of organizing partners *

- Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz, nukleare Sicherheit und Verbraucherschutz, Germany;
- SABESP Brazil;
- UNESCO Chair Water Ports and Historic Cities;
- UNESCO Chair “Fleuves et Patrimoine” (River Culture);
- Initiative for the Future of Great Rivers IFGR;
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe UNECE;
- Drinkable Rivers;
- Global Urban History Project GUHP;
- AgroParistech SUEZ Chair Water for All;
- OISAT/WASAT;
- Global Network of Water Museums WAMU-NET;
- International Water Management Institute;
- International Union for Conservation of Nature;
- Consortium for Sustainable Urbanization CSU;
- International Network of Liberal Women INLW;
- Association Internationale Villes et Ports (AIVP)
- The Alliance for Watershed Education of the Delaware River;
- Scientific Information Center of Interstate Commission for Water Coordination in Central Asia;
- Baldi Middle School – The School District of Philadelphia;
- Global Philadelphia Association;
- IHE Delft Institute for Water Education;
- Fordham University;
- Bernard and Anne Spitzer School at the City College of New York | CUNY
- The Philadelphia Water Department
- Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center;
- Drexel University;
- Deltametropolis Association;
- Delft University of Technology,
- Leiden University;
- Het Nieuwe Instituut;
- The New School;
- City of Rotterdam;
- WaterFrames;
- Womenvai;
- World Federation of Engineers Organisation WFEO;
- Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology;
- Agrisolve Ghana Limited;
- University of Strasbourg;



- University of Tours;
- EGTC Interregional Alliance for the Rhine-Alpine Corridor;
- International Federation for Housing and Planning;
- City Halle, Saale;
- ISOLA Indian Society of Landscape Architects;
- Wereldwaternet;
- InfoRelais;
- Riverhood;
- River Commons;
- Goethe Institut Rotterdam;

