

## **UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development - Public Consultation on revising the European Consensus on Development**

Fields marked with \* are mandatory.

### **(1) Introduction**

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The year 2015 was a strategic milestone for global governance, poverty eradication and sustainable development. It marked the target date of the UN Millennium Development Goals and a point to reflect on the progress made to date and the challenges ahead in addressing their unfinished business. 2015 also saw a series of landmark international summits and conferences over the course of the year (the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030](#), the [Addis Ababa Action Agenda](#), the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and the COP 21 [Paris Agreement](#) under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) which have collectively re-cast the way the international community, including the EU, will work to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication for many years.

Importantly, and in contrast to the Millennium Development Goals, the 2030 Agenda, including its seventeen Sustainable Development Goals, is a universal Agenda which applies to all countries. It reflects many core European values and interests and provides an international framework for tackling global challenges such as climate change. The EU response to the 2030 Agenda is moving ahead in a range of ways:

- Firstly, as part of EU efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda, the [Commission Work Programme for 2016](#) announces an initiative on the next steps for a sustainable European future which will explain how the EU contributes to reaching the Sustainable Development Goals and map out the internal and external aspects of EU policies contributing to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Secondly, the High Representative will present the [EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy](#) that is expected to steer the different EU external policies contributing to the global vision of a more stable, prosperous and secure world. It should set out the strategic direction for the full range of EU external action, and as such will help guide EU implementation of the 2030 Agenda in external action.
- Thirdly, the EU will review its development cooperation policy. Existing leading policy documents (including the [2005 European Consensus on Development](#) and the [2011 Agenda for Change](#)) are currently framed around the Millennium Development Goals and need to adapt to incorporate the 2030 Agenda. Given its direct relevance to the EU's overall relations with developing countries, this review will be carried out in full consistency with the ongoing work on the future of the partnership between the EU and the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, under a post-[Cotonou](#) framework.

Views from this consultation will be used to inform the way forward on the initiatives above and in particular the revision of the European Consensus on Development and other external aspects of 2030 Agenda implementation. The consultation seeks your views on **how development policy, in the context of EU external action as foreseen by the Lisbon Treaty**, should respond to the range of landmark 2015 summits and conferences, and also to the rapid changes happening in the world.

Replies can include views which could apply only to the EU institutions and also to both the EU and its Member States – it would be helpful to clarify this in your response. This open public consultation will run for 12 weeks from 30 May 2016 to 21 August 2016. A brief summary and analysis of all consultation contributions will be published by November 2016 and all individual contributions will also be made available on the consultation website (unless respondents ask for their contributions not to be published).

## (2) Information on respondents

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- \* 2.1 Received contributions may be published on the Commission's website, with the identity of the contributor. Please state your preference with regard to the publication of your contribution.

Please note that regardless of the option chosen, your contribution may be subject to a request for access to documents under [Regulation 1049/2001](#) on public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents. In such cases, the request will be assessed against the conditions set out in the Regulation and in accordance with applicable [data protection rules](#).

- ☐ I do not agree that my contribution will be published at all
- ☐ My contribution may be published but should be kept anonymous; I declare that none of it is subject to copyright restrictions that prevent publication
- ☒ My contribution may be published under the name indicated; I declare that none of it is subject to copyright restrictions that prevent publication

- \* 2.2 Are you registered in the EU's Transparency Register?

Please note: Organisations, networks, platforms or self-employed individuals engaged in activities aimed at influencing the EU decision making process are expected to register in the transparency Register. During the analysis of replies to a consultation, contributions from respondents who choose not to register will be treated as individual contributions (unless the contributors are recognised as representative stakeholders through Treaty provisions, European Social Dialogue, Art. 154-155 TFEU).

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

- \* 2.2.1 If yes, what is your registration number?

09175433167-27

- \* 2.3 Name (entity or individual in their personal capacity)

AquaFed - The International Federation of Private Water Operators

2.5 What type of stakeholder are you?

- ☐ Government institution / Public administration
- ☐ University / Academic organisation
- ☐ Civil society (including Non-Governmental Organisation, specialised policy organisation, think tank)
- ☐ International organisation
- ☒ Private sector or private company
- ☐ Citizen/private individual
- ☐ Other

2.6 Please specify

\* 2.7 What is your place of residence (if you are answering as a private individual) or where are the headquarters of your organisation situated (if you are answering on behalf of an organisation)?

- ☒ In one of the 28 EU Member States
- ☐ Other

2.8 Please specify

(3) Context: why a change is needed

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The EU and its Member States are determined to implement the 2030 Agenda through internal and external actions as well as contribute to the successful implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, given the strong interlinkages. In this context, our policies, should take into account changing global conditions and trends, to ensure that they remain fit-for-purpose across the time-horizon to 2030.

The global landscape has changed significantly compared to the time of adoption of the Millennium Development Goals. While much has been achieved, with more than one billion people having been lifted out of extreme poverty since 1990, great challenges remain and new ones are emerging. At global level, more than 800 million people still live on less than USD 1.25 a day. The world is witnessing multiple conflicts and security tensions, complex humanitarian and global health crises, deteriorations of human rights, environmental degradation, resource scarcity, urbanisation and migration. Migration flows across the world will continue to have important impacts, and present both a risk and an opportunity. The EU needs to address global security challenges, including tackling the root causes of conflict and instability and countering violent extremism. Climate change can continue to amplify problems and can severely undermine progress. Important changes include demographic trends, a new distribution of wealth and power between and within countries, the continuing globalisation of economies and value chains, an evolving geography of poverty and a proliferation of actors working on development. Projections also suggest important challenges are ahead (for example, continuing unprecedented urbanisation, and other demographic challenges including ageing societies for some and the potential for a demographic dividend for others). Continued attention will be given to a democratic, stable and prosperous neighbourhood. A revision to EU development policy should take into account these trends (including anticipating those that will remain central in future) whilst retaining a core focus on eradicating poverty and finishing the job started by the Millennium Development Goals.

Finally, the EU Consensus needs also to adapt to the Lisbon Treaty, which provides for all external action policies to work within the frameworks and pursue the principles of objectives of Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union. In particular, coherence between the different parts of EU external action and between external and internal policies is crucial.

The EU will need to address these new global challenges, many of which require coordinated policy action at the national, regional and global levels. The 2030 Agenda provides a framework which can guide us in doing so.

### 3.1 There is a range of key global trends (e.g. changing geography and depth of poverty; challenges related to climate change, political, economic, social, demographic, security, environmental or technological) which will influence the future of development and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Which of these do you think is the most important?

From AquaFed's perspective, the challenges posed by the multiple aspects of water when they interact with the global trends identified in the question are very seriously underrated. There is still far too little attention paid to water in political decision-making and action at all levels from local to international.

Water is a fundamental element and natural resource that influences, and is

influenced by, all three dimensions of sustainable development. Together with air and land it forms the basis of all processes that permit social, environmental and economic activity. Bringing air, water and land together with energy it becomes possible to produce food. Water is also necessary for much of the "synthetic" energy production needed for modern life. The use of air, energy, food, land and water also creates wastes, which in turn have to be absorbed within the sustainable capacity of the natural environment. Today this capacity is being seriously overdrawn in many places. It is now urgent that this overuse of fundamental resources, including water, is restricted and overcome to achieve long-term sustainability.

Water is intimately linked with climate change, security, social stability, economic activity and environmental sustainability. It is a driver behind conflict and migration. Water's availability and quality will be impacted by demographics, consumption behaviour and production methods, while technology can both help and hinder, depending on how it is used.

The private water operators that AquaFed represents are by definition interested in all matters relevant to public water services, environmental and health protection. Societal and human rights principles such as equality of treatment and non-discrimination. Transparency of public decision-making and accountability mechanism are extremely important dimensions of the public policies that need to be in place to make effective provision of water and sanitation services available, irrespective of whether they are provided by public or by private operators.

The goals, targets and indicators of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development have been carefully negotiated to be an integrated and interrelated entity. They are intended to be viewed as a whole and for each country to adopt and prioritise their actions within that framework. It is extremely important that the integrity of this vision is maintained in policy making and enacted to the full.

The core objective is to eradicate poverty while respecting all three dimensions of sustainable development. Poverty can only be overcome if the environmental resources that enable people to be fed, educated, healthy and employed are managed with great care and in ways that encompass a circular economy approach that embraces the necessity to consider all materials as recoverable and renewable. Water is no exception in this respect.

Within the SDGs, the dedicated goal for water has been carefully crafted to encompass a "whole water cycle" approach. This is radically different from the restricted "taps and toilets" vision of the MDG's. The water goal (SDG 6) has 6 key targets and 2 implementation targets and encompasses 10 proposed core indicators and numerous secondary indicators. The relationships between them are important as they are interdependent. Some of these indicators have evolved from the experience gained from the MDG's and others have been developed specifically for the purpose of national and global monitoring. The indicators and monitoring processes will have to be adapted in the case of many countries and initially followed with some degree of flexibility at international level. It is important that both within countries and at UN level that monitoring and reporting support the ambitious political vision of the SDGs and are not allowed to hold it back for reasons of "technical" purity.

Water related issues of particular importance as far as EU water and development policies are concerned include: water pollution, water stress,

lack/insufficiency of water services, allocation of water between users and uses, investment needed for construction, operation and maintenance of water systems and services, economic sustainability of water systems and services, alignment between policy objectives and policy instruments, social support systems in relation to water charges, realisation of the human rights to water and sanitation, floods, droughts, water related disasters...

### 3.2 How should EU policies, and development policy in particular, better harness the opportunities and minimise the negative aspects of the trend you identified in the previous question?

In general, there is a need for a much greater level of awareness of the water issues identified above within the political and policy-making circles. Political considerations and debate related to water need to be elevated to at least the same level as climate change and migration. These issues are closely interrelated and should be treated with equal importance. Within Europe, the EU has a range of positive policies with regard to water. However, there remains a considerable effort to be undertaken to ensure the implementation of Pan-European water and environmental services in ways which overcome the existing barriers to trade and the application of constraints in ways that are not transparent and do not align with EU core principles. Social and environmental protection measures, which are deemed appropriate by all levels of government, should be observed and enforced. However, these should not result in breaches of the open European market or in covert protectionism of particular sectors of activity in particular countries. In international development policy, the EU should ensure consistency between EU and individual member states overseas development assistance programs and activities. We perceive an anti-private sector bias in the EU Water Initiative and in the attitudes of certain member states. In order to meet the outcomes of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, it has been widely recognised that the role of the private sector is essential. Therefore, any bias, perceived or real, needs to be removed. This does not mean that states or sub-sovereigns should be obliged to use the private sector, but they should have the choice to do so if they consider that the solutions offered by the private sector will help them.

## (4) Priorities for our future action: what we need to do

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Implementation of the 2030 Agenda will require sustained EU efforts to promote a more just world, including a strong focus on the need to address gender equality and women's empowerment. Peace, inclusiveness, equality and good governance including democracy, accountability, rule of law, human rights and non-discrimination will need particular emphasis. The 2030 Agenda also requires recognition of the close interconnectedness between poverty, social issues, economic transformation, climate change and environmental issues.

To achieve poverty eradication, EU development policy will need to take into account key demographic and environmental trends, including challenges related to climate change, and concentrate effort on least developed countries and fragile states. The EU will also need to strengthen our approach to fragility and conflict, fostering resilience and security (as an increasing proportion of the world's poor are expected to live in fragile and conflict affected states) and to protect global public goods and to maintain our resource base as the prerequisite for sustainable growth. Peace and security, including security sector reform, will have to be addressed also through our development policy, as will the risks and opportunities related to migration flows. Tackling social and economic inequalities (both within and between countries) is a crucial element of the 2030 Agenda as is addressing environmental degradation and climate change. Job creation will be an important challenge in which the private sector has to play an active role. Finishing the job of the Millennium Development Goals requires identifying and reaching those people throughout the world who are still not benefitting from progress to ensure that no one is left behind.

To achieve lasting results, EU development policy will need to foster transformation and promote inclusive and sustainable growth. Drivers of inclusive sustainable growth, such as human development, renewable energy, sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and healthy and resilient oceans should be an important part of our efforts to implement the new Agenda as will efforts aimed at tackling hunger and under-nutrition. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda will require a multi-dimensional, integrated approach to human development. Implementation will also require us to address vectors of change, such as sustainable urban development and relevant use of information and communication technology. Our development policy will have to engage and identify new ways of partnering with the business in order to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth, industrialisation and innovation. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda will also require cooperation with partner countries and regions on science, technology and innovation. In all aspects of our external action, the EU will need to ensure that our approaches, including development cooperation, are conducive to achieving the 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals and that the EU intensifies efforts to promote pursue coherence between our policies and our internal and external action.



#### 4.1 How can the EU better address the links between achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement on climate change and addressing other global sustainable development challenges?

It is very telling that the preamble to this question does not mention water in any way. This is a very significant omission for the reasons outlined in our previous answers and it needs to be rectified.

There are strong links between the way water underpins the Sustainable Development Goals and the way that water is crucial to the outcomes of the Paris Agreement.

The current lack of attention to water in both climate change mitigation and adaptation needs to be overcome. At its centre, sustainability depends on reducing the amounts of pollution entering air, water and land. Climate change is a consequence of both air and water pollution. Water scarcity and water stress are seriously exacerbated by both air and water pollution. In many ways, the EU leads the world in policies and measures aimed at limiting or eliminating air and water pollution. Europe should therefore accelerate its efforts in these directions within all member states and also use its experience and example to help other nations to reach the levels of performance necessary to achieve sustainability.

Continuing to promote policies that reduce, remove, recover and reuse polluting materials from water in the context of circular economies and sustainable consumption and production will be very important. SDG target 6.3 is important in this context.

The EU should craft a carbon fee on products and services and the revenues from this fee should be directed towards emission prevention funds.

#### 4.2 How should the EU strengthen the balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in its internal and external policies, and in particular in its development policy?

The EU should seek to break down the institutional and intellectual barriers that currently segment development policy making and implementation into compartments that communicate badly with each other, if at all. In this sense, the philosophy of the 2030 Vision should be helpful. A specific EU wide SDG unit with the task of breaking down barriers and facilitating coordination across all the SDGs within the EU could be useful. A Department of this kind could also examine the linkages between the SDGs to ensure that all relevant EU organisations are aware of them and maximise the opportunities they create. This would be similar to the exercise being carried out for the UN General Assembly by the group headed by the Permanent Representative of Columbia (see their initial report submitted on 25 July 2016 entitled “Report on Strategic Alignment of Future Sessions of the General Assembly with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” This is accessible at: <http://www.un.org/pga/70/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2015/08/Alignment-future-sessions-with-2030-Agenda-21-July-2016.pdf> . An approach of this kind would also build on the logic of actions such as the Water Food Energy Nexus and could usefully be extended to other linkages within society and the economy.

#### 4.3 What are the main changes you would like to see in the EU's development policy framework?

In line with the previous answer, AquaFed and its members are disturbed by their experience that EU development policy separates overall development mechanisms (education, capacity building etc.) on the one hand from the provision and construction of infrastructure on the other. This breaks the essential links between these two fields that ought to be developed together and in harmony with each other. Experience shows that water supply and sanitation services can only develop satisfactorily if the physical assets and operating procedures are being upgraded at the same time. This requires a simultaneous blend of capacity building and capital delivery mechanisms. This is best achieved by taking a mid-term approach that brings these two aspects together in projects that are orientated on an “output-based” approach. We would also expect to see future EU development policy being much more open to private sector participation in general and in particular to facilitate a much greater involvement of private sector water operators. These operators have the capacity to assist local decision-makers and public authorities to meet the development and human rights obligations of states. They do this by contributing to diagnosing needs and providing appropriate technological solutions, by transferring technology, by capacity building in terms of skills, know-how and know why, and by affecting change management to improve service performance.

**4.4 In which areas highlighted above would you expect to see greater consistency between development policy and other areas of the EU external action in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda?**

We note that good service provision, whether delivered by a public sector, private sector or combined operator, is greatly enhanced by good governance that separates political, administrative and industrial operational activities and that enhances transparency and accountability. This separation could still be improved in some EU countries. In addition, good governance of water and other services in countries that benefit from EU development support is something that EU policy should focus on.

**4.5 In which areas does the EU have greatest value-added as a development partner (e.g. which aspects of its development policy, dialogue or implementation arrangements or in which category of countries)?**

Fragmentation of the many dimensions of water policy in general and water development in particular has long been a difficult problem to overcome. By its very nature water has a direct or indirect impact on numerous areas of policy and societal activity. The number of UN agencies involved in UN-Water underlines this point.

The importance of this challenge has now become widely recognised as has been underlined by the UNSGAB final report “The UNSGAB journey”. (

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/water/unsgab/finalreport> ) The report to the UN General Assembly cited above ( <http://www.un.org/pga/70/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2015/08/Alignment-future-sessions-with-2030-Agenda-21-July-2016.pdf> ) has likewise highlighted that the SDG6 targets “remain largely uncovered under the GAA and ECOSOC agendas.”

The EU should give its full support to the EU Water Experts Group considerations and in particular the initiative to promote a UN Intergovernmental Body on Water. A body of this kind, with expert support provided as proposed by a strengthened UN-Water, could go a long way to raising the profile of water issues and satisfy the need for improving policy coordination and coherence.

#### 4.6 How can the EU refine its development policy to better address inequalities – including gender inequality – in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda?

In the field of water supply, sanitation and wastewater management, AquaFed and its members observe that inequalities are best eliminated by providing a high quality service that is compliant with the requirements of the human rights to water and sanitation. The further service quality deteriorates from these standards, the more serious are the effects of disparity between women and men and between rich and poor. See AquaFed's joint submission to the UN special rapporteur's enquiry on this subject. (See News at <http://www.aquafed.org/News/Entry/item/aquafed-and-women-for-water-partnership-contribute-jointly-to-a-report-for-ohchr-12.sls> and download the document at [http://www.aquafed.org/Public/Files/\\_\\_\\_Uploads/files/2016-01-31\\_Vf\\_AquaFed-WfWP-HRWS-Gender\\_Equity.pdf](http://www.aquafed.org/Public/Files/___Uploads/files/2016-01-31_Vf_AquaFed-WfWP-HRWS-Gender_Equity.pdf) )

The core business of AquaFed's members frequently involves them assisting the public authorities that are responsible for implementation of the human rights to water and sanitation. They do this by taking on the operational responsibility of substandard services and improving them to reach compliance and thereby address and eventually eliminate inequalities. In this way they a tool that the public authority uses and controls to meet its obligations. This approach is entirely compatible with the UN Human Rights positions.

#### 4.7 How can the EU development policy make a stronger contribution to the security of people? How can EU development policy contribute to addressing the root causes of conflict and fragility and contribute to security and resilience in all the countries where we work?

National and personal security are deeply impacted by the security of access to water and the reliability of protection from the effects of water pollution. In this respect, water security extends from transboundary water relations to the reliability of domestic water services. EU development policy should devote more effort to all dimensions of water. By doing so and by recognising and promoting the interconnections between water and other linked drivers such as food security, employment and public health and wellbeing, it can help to tackle these issues at all levels from intergovernmental through to local.

#### 4.8 How can a revised Consensus on Development better harness the opportunities presented by migration, minimise the negative aspects of irregular migration on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and better address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement?

A revised Consensus on Development must articulate the points related to water and water pollution issues that we have raised in the previous answers. Water issues remain too often a missing link or neglected dimension in these considerations.

It is possible that encouraging migration away from certain water stressed locations in an organised way could be beneficial. This however would probably raise some very difficult sociological and ethical issues.

Lack of water for domestic and agricultural use is known to be a cause of irregular migration in some cases. There are locations where this could be overcome by paying more attention to correcting the deficiencies where these arise from inadequate investment or operation of the related services.

Forced displacements may also be necessary to move people who have settled illegally or informally in areas where they are at risk themselves or create risks for others. This can be the case for example when people have settled in high risk flood prone locations. In these cases, prevention is better and easier than forced removal, but both situations are very difficult. Regular attention to water issues in spatial planning and control of settlements, which depends on good awareness on the part of political decision makers can help to foresee and to reduce these difficulties.

#### (5) Means of implementation: how do we get there?

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The principle of universality underpinning the 2030 Agenda will require a differentiated approach to engagement with countries at all levels of development. Official Development Assistance will continue to play an important role in the overall financing mix for those countries most in need (particularly the Least Developed Countries). The EU and its Member States should continue to progress towards achieving their commitments. However, in all countries our development cooperation will need to take account of other sources of finance, including by leveraging other (non-Official Development Assistance) sources of finance for poverty eradication and sustainable development. The delivery of the 2030 Agenda means that our work helping countries raise their own resources (domestic resource mobilisation), the provision of aid for trade, blending\* and partnering with the private sector should be priority areas of focus. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, an integral part of the 2030 Agenda, provides a framework for our efforts, including for our work supporting the right enabling policy environment for sustainable development in our partner countries. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement on climate change under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change should be closely coordinated given the strong interlinkages. Engagement with middle income countries, notably the emerging economies, will be important to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, considering the role they can play in promoting global public goods, what they can achieve within their respective countries on poverty eradication and sustainable development, and the example they can set within their regions as well as their role in regional processes. Here differentiated partnerships can play an important role (examples include different forms of political, economic, and financial investment as well as cooperation in science, technology and innovation). Specific attention and focus should also be given to Least Developed Countries, as acknowledged by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

The EU's implementation of the 2030 Agenda provides an opportunity for enhancing consistency between the different areas of the EU's external action and between these and other EU policies (as outlined in the Lisbon Treaty and in [EU's Comprehensive Approach to external conflict and crises](#)). The EU will continue to pursue [Policy Coherence for Development](#) as a key contribution to the collective effort towards broader policy coherence for sustainable development. In our external action, the EU needs to consider how we can use all policies, tools, instruments at our disposal coherently in line with the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda.

\* Combining EU grants with loans or with equity from other public and private financiers with a view to leveraging additional resources.

#### 5.1 How can EU policies, and EU development policy in particular, help to mobilise and maximise the impact of the increasing variety of sustainable development finance, including in particular from the private sector?

Taking account of the necessity to extend the access of water and sanitation services to the billions of people who do not have these basic necessities and improve the performance of the unreliable services suffered by millions of others, the need for investment in water and sanitation infrastructure, maintenance, replacement and operations amounts to many trillions of Euros. Added to this, the requirements for water investments for agriculture and food, energy, flood protection and environmental security are considerable. For long-term sustainability, the financing of all these elements needs to be generated by the societies themselves. This has been recognised by the AAAA and is clearly recognised in the preamble to this question. However, the challenge of moving from under-investment to stable self-sustaining investment presents many countries, including developed economies, with enormous challenges. It is now widely recognised that ODA alone cannot provide the solution and in some cases can even create an aid dependency that makes matters worse.

Private financing in several different forms can play a role in overcoming this investment gap. However, it is very unlikely to do so unless states and sub-sovereigns can demonstrate good governance and assure investors long-term security. EU development activities should concentrate their efforts in two key directions. The first is to use ODA in a rigorous manner to promote and help instil good governance in recipient countries. This is an essential step to “pump priming” the local economy to encourage both local and foreign direct investment. The other step is to use ODA to help countries to overcome the initial investment hurdle in the provision of essential basic infrastructure that is a necessary precondition for long term sustainability as well as a catalyst for private investment. Investment in water services is an area that should be prioritised, because it creates a multiplier effect in other areas such as public health and education.

In well-designed Public Private Partnership contracts, there is considerable potential to blend financing from public and private sources. Combinations of grants, equity, and debt coming from ODA, local sources and international investors need to be facilitated. This will only be possible where stability and good governance can be demonstrated.

Private water operators should not be seen as the only or even prime source of private sector finance for water service and similar projects. While private financing can be one of the main attractions of PPPs for governments, it is the efficiency gains and improved service quality and compliance that is brought by the private sectors management systems, innovative technologies and techniques that make PPPs an attractive mode for the delivery of water and sanitation services. This capacity to provide built-in efficiency mechanisms through PPPs should be favoured in EU policy for two reasons. Firstly, it contributes directly to solving the funding gap in the sector even when the private operators do not invest directly themselves because it makes projects attractive to other kinds of public and private finance. Secondly it increases the accountability and transparency of the sector at large and this further enhances its attractiveness.

5.2 Given the evolving availability of other sources of finance and bearing in mind the EU's commitments on Official Development Assistance (e.g. [Council Conclusions from 26 May 2015 on "A New Global Partnership for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development after 2015"](#), and inter alia, paragraphs 32 and 33), how and where should the EU use its Official Development Assistance strategically and to maximise its impact?

This has been covered in our preceding answers.

5.3 How can the EU better support partner countries in mobilising their own resources for poverty eradication and sustainable development?

The EU could support partner countries in several ways. Supporting good governance has already been mentioned. Helping countries to recognise the need for realistic economic approaches to their planning and operation of services such as water and sanitation would in many cases be very beneficial. This should enable services to be planned so that costs and revenues balance in the long-term. The application of the OECD "Strategic financial planning" approach is one that should be integrated more deeply in development aid programmes. Particular emphasis on devising cost recovery systems and in the application of social solidarity mechanisms is frequently needed. Ancillary to this, the EU could look at ways to help countries to refine their taxation systems to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of tax revenue and its application to projects that advance sustainability and poverty alleviation.

5.4 Given the importance of middle income countries to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, what form could differentiated partnerships take?

The specific EU wide SDG unit with the task of breaking down barriers and facilitating coordination across all the SDGs within the EU could be useful as suggested above (4.2).



5.5 Given experience so far in taking into account the objectives of development cooperation in the implementation of EU policies which are likely to affect developing countries (e.g. [Policy Coherence for Development: 2015 EU Report](#)), how should the EU step up its efforts to achieve Policy Coherence for Development, as a key contribution to the collective effort towards policy coherence for sustainable development? How can we help ensure that policies in developing countries, and internationally contribute coherently to sustainable development priorities?

As indicated in our response to question 4.2, we suggest that a specific EU wide SDG unit with the task of breaking down barriers and facilitating coordination across all the SDGs within the EU could be useful.

## (6) The actors: making it work together

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An important feature of the new Agenda is that all governments, developed and developing, will need to work with a wide range of stakeholders (including the private sector, civil society and research institutions) to improve the transparency and inclusivity of decision-making, planning, service delivery, and monitoring and to ensure synergy and complementarity.

The EU must continue to work collaboratively with others and contribute to a coordinated approach. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda puts national plans for implementation (including associated financing and policy frameworks) at the centre. To maximise our impact, EU development policy should be based on a strategic and comprehensive strategy for each country, which also responds to the country-specific context.

Our partner countries' implementation of the 2030 Agenda will inform our overall engagement and our development cooperation dialogue with them and will help shape our support for their national efforts. The EU should also help partner countries put in place the necessary enabling policy frameworks to eradicate poverty, tackle sustainable development challenges and enhance their policy coherence.

There is a need for a renewed emphasis on the quality of development cooperation, including existing commitments on aid and development effectiveness made in Paris, Accra and Busan\* and through work with the [Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation](#).

An updated EU development policy should also provide a shared vision that guides the action of the EU and Member States in development cooperation, putting forward proposals on how to further enhance coordination, complementarity and coherence between EU and Member States. Strengthening [Joint Programming](#) will be an important part of this. Improving the division of labour between the EU and its Member States in order to reduce aid fragmentation will also contribute to increased development effectiveness.

\* See [Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action](#) and the [Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation](#)

**6.1 How should the EU strengthen its partnerships with civil society, foundations, the business community, parliaments and local authorities and academia to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (including the integral Addis Ababa Action Agenda) and the Paris Agreement on climate change?**

From the point of view of water in sustainable development and the 2030 agenda, a number of good ideas have been advanced by the EU Water Experts Group in April 2016. There is probably scope for this group to interact more actively with the other groups identified in this question. This could be done by creating a more structured and formalised approach to engagement that might draw lessons from the UN Major Groups architecture.

There is also scope to reinvigorate the EU Water Initiative in a way that encourages further and equal opportunities for engagement of all parties, including the private sector.

It should also be recognised that the private sector is not a monolithic block, but composed of very different sectors that operate under different constraints and business models. There are very significant differences between say water service providers, agri-food businesses, chemical companies, and financial services organisations. Many of these have interests and activities related specifically to water and development. A renewed EU Water Initiative should take account of these differences and the range of contributions that different business sectors can contribute.

**6.2 How can the EU promote private sector investment for sustainable development?**

See our responses to earlier questions

**6.3 How can the EU strengthen relations on sustainable development with other countries, international financing institutions, multilateral development banks, emerging donors and the UN system?**

We believe that regular engagement with institutions of this kind could be very fruitful. It could be enhanced by the work of the specific EU wide SDG unit that we have suggested above.

6.4 How can the EU best support partner countries to develop comprehensive and inclusive national plans for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda?

See our responses to earlier questions

6.5 What are the best ways to strengthen and improve coherence, complementarity and coordination between the EU and the Member States in their support to help partner countries achieve poverty eradication and sustainable development?

See our responses to earlier questions

6.6 How can EU development cooperation be as effective as possible, and how can we work with all partners to achieve this?

See our responses to earlier questions

6.7 What further progress could be made in EU Joint Programming, and how could this experience be linked with other EU joined-up actions in supporting countries' delivery of the 2030 Agenda?

See our responses to earlier questions

## (7) Keeping track of progress

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The EU will need to contribute to the global follow-up and review process for the 2030 Agenda. Keeping track of progress in a systematic and transparent way is essential for delivering the 2030 Agenda. The EU is actively contributing to the setting up of a Sustainable Development Goal monitoring system at global, regional and national level. Demonstrating results and impact from our efforts and the promotion of transparency will be important priorities for EU development policy, as part of a wider move to strengthen accountability, follow-up and review at all levels.

7.1 How can the EU strengthen its own use of evidence and analysis, including in the development field, to feed into its regular review on the Sustainable Development Goals to the UN?

We understand that the initial experience from the first voluntary national reviews presented at the 2016 HLPF suggest that these are most useful when a country has set up a definite and dedicated process. The EU could learn from this and work towards a similar Europe wide process that would need to involve the input from individual states. This could be an additional way of reinforcing coherence and cohesiveness in EU wide development policy. It could also be a stimulus to using the considerable amounts of data available already in the EU in new ways or to strengthen existing EU data collection and reporting systems.

## 7.2 How can the EU help to ensure the accountability of all actors involved in implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including the private sector? How can the EU encourage a strong and robust approach to the Follow Up and Review of the 2030 Agenda from all actors?

The EU should develop its monitoring and reporting systems and enhance their transparency mechanisms so that accountability of public services does not remain a mainly qualitative and subjective matter.

Performance indicators are being used extensively in industrial and commercial activities and are subject to official standardisation. This means that markets can assess performance and add value in terms of quantifiable goods and service provision.

There is no reason for the public sector services provision to stay outside this trend. The inherent fragmentation of local governments should not impede the adoption of a more precise and quantifiable approach to reporting their performance in ways that are consistent with what is expected from similar services operated under private sector provision.

Consolidated reporting at country level could be incorporated into a EU wide system. This in turn could be contributed to the global level reviews being put in place by the UN.

We also believe that the EU should give its full support to the UN Water Global Extended Monitoring Initiative (GEMI). This is already actively supported by several EU Member States and Switzerland. It would be useful to extend this support to the whole of the EU and also to promote the initiative and approach in countries that benefit from EU development support.

## 7.3 How should EU development cooperation respond to the regular reviews on progress of the partner countries towards the 2030 Agenda goals?

We believe that it should respond to the reviews on progress on a regular basis through active engagement in the UN HLPF, UN wide monitoring processes and by providing a consolidated EU position in a similar way to the voluntary national reviews.

There is considerable scope for EU statistical bodies to work with the UN and other countries to help improve the indicators that have been developed or proposed, and which will need refinement as the period to 2030 and beyond evolves.

Experience in the water with the Joint Monitoring Programme has shown how indicators and monitoring have to evolve and be refined as the data itself improves. These lessons have already helped the development of some of the new water target indicators, but it has to be recognised that some of these indicators may be too complex initially for some countries and that other indicators are some way from being fully satisfactory. The challenge of measuring water productivity and use efficiency being a good example.

## Contact

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