



**Statement by
David Cooper
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World Water Day
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Water for Peace**

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Water has the power to create peace or provoke conflict. When there is lack of water, or lack of access to it, tensions can rise. However, by cooperating and ensuring access to clean water, we can achieve stability. To do that, we need water to be center stage in global planning.

Over two billion people are living without safely managed drinking water and roughly half of the world's population is still experiencing severe water scarcity for at least part of the year.

Our water supply depends on water-related ecosystems, whose functioning depends on biodiversity. These ecosystems also regulate climate, reduce impacts of natural hazards, and provide habitats for fish species that feed hundreds of millions of people worldwide.

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, or the Biodiversity Plan, sets out the urgent actions needed to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030. Its four goals aim to Protect & Restore Nature, to Prosper with Nature, to Share Benefits Fairly and to Invest & Collaborate for Nature.

Each of the Plan's 23 targets are relevant to water. Some aim to protect and restore critical habitats, reduce pollution, and minimize the impacts of invasive alien species, others ensure areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries, and forestry are managed sustainably. Other targets call for the values of biodiversity – including water-related values – to be integrated into policies across all government ministries, economic sectors, and all facets of society. These actions must be taken through a gender-responsive approach, while also ensuring the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities.

The 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity will convene in Cali, Colombia in October 2024 under the theme "Peace with nature". It is time to make peace among people and peace with the planet.

This World Water Day, let us work together to promote water for peace and peace with nature.
