



Valuing Water: Bonn Water Network celebrates World Water Day 2021

The [Bonn Water Network*](#), a network of ten renowned institutions with longstanding experience on water and related issues, together celebrate World Water Day 2021 with an online event on March 23. (More information on the event further below).

Water is life – and a key resource for sustainable development and the implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement. Many of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) depend on the availability of sufficient and clean water resources. Water is key not only to achieve goal 6 (“Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”), but it also underpins access to education, sustainable urban development, sustainable ecosystems, land degradation neutrality, energy, zero hunger, health, responsible consumption and production, climate mitigation and adaptation and many other goals. From Bonn as a major hub for sustainable development, Bonn Water Network contributes to strengthen the expertise needed in research, training and practice to implement water-related sustainable development goals around the world.

Ensuring sustainable water management and governance to meet the competing demands is a challenge. Problems range from too little water (70 countries are regularly stricken by drought and water scarcity affecting more than 40 per cent of the global population), to too much water. Floods and other water-related disasters account for 70 per cent of all deaths related to natural hazards. Another issue is lacking access to water of good quality: 3 in 10 people lack access to safely managed drinking water services, and 2.4 billion people lack access to basic sanitation services. In addition, sustainable governance of oceans and seas as a global water resource that provides and regulates the critical food, water and air on Earth is also challenging. Developing countries are affected most by these challenges.

In order to raise awareness about and foster action to address the global water crisis, [World Water Day](#) on March 22 every year became a UN observance day in 1993. [World Water Day 2021](#) focuses on the theme 'Valuing Water'. This focus extends beyond issues of pricing and includes the environmental, social, and cultural value people place on water.

What do our Bonn Water Network experts say about 'Valuing Water' from their perspectives?

Read their statements here:

[Dr. Luna Bharati](#), principal scientist with the International Water Management Institute (IWMI): “IWMI’s research responds directly to the demand for innovative, scientifically tested water-management solutions for sustainable development by addressing three high priority water challenges: Food and Ecosystems; Climate Change and Resilience; and Growth and Inclusion”. More on [IWMI’s work on water here](#).

[Prof. Mariele Evers](#), Head of Research Group Eco-Hydrology and Water Resources Management / UNESCO Chair Human-Water-Systems - [Geography Department - University of Bonn](#): “In our research we focus on the interrelations between various factors in human-water systems in terms of functional, spatial and temporal connectedness. We evaluate water-related ecosystem services and

we develop methodologies for integrated assessment and management”.

More information at https://www.geographie.uni-bonn.de/research/rg/rg-evers?set_language=en

[Dr. Birgit Kemmerling](#), researcher at the *Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC)*: “Water has multiple, often competing meanings for different actors, sectors and regions. For BICC, valuing water means, in particular, understanding local needs, concerns and values of water and integrating them into political decision-making processes in order to avoid or mitigate conflicts”.

More information on BICC’s work on water at [War and Peace/Module Environmental Safety](#).

[Dr. Jean Carlo Rodríguez](#), senior researcher at German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik ([DIE](#)): “Water has multiple meanings, reducing them only to its economic dimension neglects the social embeddedness of water and risks marginalizing the most vulnerable” (Rodriguez-de-Francisco and Schoderer, 2021).

More information on DIE’s work on water: <https://www.die-gdi.de/en/water-governance/>

[Dr. Bernhard Tischbein](#), senior researcher at [ZEF](#): “Contributing to sustainable development is an essential need and task in valuing water. ZEF’s research is combining hydrological, bio-physical, agricultural, environmental, socio-economical, institutional, and policy dimensions of water towards supportive management tools and strategies”.

[More information on ZEF’s water-related research here.](#)

Join the [Bonn Water Network event](#) on **Tuesday March 23, 2021 | 5:00- 6:30 pm (CET)**

with the launch of [Handbook of Water Resources Management: Discourses, Concepts and Examples](#)’ (published by Springer, 2021) and an expert round-table discussion!

Please register via zoom here: https://uni-bonn.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_1Le-D_2uSy2gGMTVFBgNOQ

*) The [Bonn Water Network](#) aims at bundling and representing the Bonn-based capacities for water research, training and policy advice with a focus on international activities but also well established in the German and European contexts. The Network’s members are: the *Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC)*; *Bonn University* with its *Institute of Geography (GIUB)* holding the UNESCO Chair in Human Water Systems, the *Center for Development Research (ZEF)* and the *Institute for Hygiene and Public Health (IHPH)*; the *German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE)*; the [IUCN](#) Environmental Law Center; the *International Water Management Institute (IWMI)* and three Bonn-based UN institutions: the *United Nations Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS)* and the *Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)* and the Global Water Operators Partnerships Alliance ([UN-Habitat/GWOPA](#)).