

8th World Water Forum, Brasilia

Side Event: The Forest-Water Nexus: redefining the narrative to build a sustainable future

Convenors: UN FAO; IUCN; SIWI Swedish Water House

Date and Time: Wednesday 21 March, 15:30-18.00, room 41

Event summary:

We live on a blue and green planet. To achieve a resilient future, natural solutions such as managing forests for water supply, will be required. This event will highlight the prevailing forest-water narratives, promote consensus on how to address integrating forests in water management and water in forest management and will provide an occasion to announce next steps and opportunities for engagement.

Event description:

Water security is one our greatest challenges. Trees and forests are imperative for water flows. Integrated land-water management, including the strategic management of forests and landscapes with water considerations, will be crucial for resilient water supply. Approximately 75% of available freshwater sources come from forested watersheds (MEA, 2005). Despite the importance of forests as natural infrastructure, water is not a management consideration for 75% of forests worldwide (FAO, 2015).

Forests and their water-related ecosystem services can provide cost-effective, natural solutions to address growing water scarcity. Forests act as natural water filters, regulating water flows, improving infiltration and reducing soil erosion. It is estimated that forests as green infrastructure for water supply can cost less than USD 2 per person per year, which is offset by savings from reduced water treatment (World Bank, 2012; Abell *et al.*, 2017).

This event will discuss the prevailing narratives surrounding forests and water: the myths, the complex truths and the implications our understanding has on practice and policy, and vice versa. It aims to bridge the divide between the water and forest sectors and suggest next steps to better integrate forests in water management and water in forest management.

Event objectives and expected outcomes:




The event targets water, forest and natural resource management professionals to foster dialogue and improve collaboration between these sectors. Forests serve as natural infrastructure, providing and regulating water, including groundwater recharge and erosion control. Moreover, forests maintain and improve water quality; reducing costs associated with water treatment.

We will highlight the challenges and opportunities of the forest-water nexus in practice and policy and how management and policies need to be based on a scientific understanding of environmental systems. We will complement and challenge some of the forest-water rhetoric from both water and forest communities, progressing the conversation of the past 15 years into one for 2030 and beyond. Therefore, the event aims to seek consensus between the water and forest sectors that will encourage collaborative, strategic management of forests as natural solutions addressing development for people and nature contributing to the SDGs and the Paris Agreement.

Session Outline (Total 150 minutes max)

Session Starts (15:30)		
15:30 (5 min)	<i>Welcome: The Journey So Far</i>	James Dalton , IUCN
Two Key Note Speakers to Frame the Subject (15:35)		
Key Note 1 (15 min)	The myths and legends of forests and water – defining the existing narrative	Eduardo Mansur , Director of Land and Water Division, FAO
Key Note 2 (15 min)	Championing forests and water – cross-sectoral collaboration (Launch of the statement)	Torgny Holmgren , Executive Director, SIWI
Video (16:10)		
(10 min)	Amazonia’s flying rivers – No forest no water	Ulrike Pokorski (tbc) GIZ
Panel Discussion (16:20)		
Panel discussion (50 min)	Moderator: John Matthews, Alliance for Global Water Adaptation (AGWA) <i>Brief introduction of Panel members followed by questions</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Abdullah Al Mohsin Chowdhury, State Secretary at Ministry of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh (tbc) • Jan Cassin, Forest Trends • Mampiti Matete, Regional Water Coordinator, IUCN East and Southern Africa Regional office • Suzanne Ozment, WRI, Washington DC • Claude Gascon, GEF Secretariat • Lis Mullin Bernhardt, UN Environment 	
Audience Questions to the Panel (17:10)		
Questions from the Audience (20 min)	Facilitated audience engagement	John Matthews , AGWA
Closing Presentation (17:30)		
Regional importance (10 min)	The importance of Forests and Water in the Amazon region	Theresa Castillion-Elder , ACTO
Closing (17:40)		
Conclusion and Wrap up (5-10 min)	Concluding points, next steps	James Dalton , IUCN
Session End (18:00)		

Speaker and Panellist Bios

	<p>Key Note 1: Eduardo Mansur, a Brazilian national has been working for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) as the Director for the Forest Assessment, Management and Conservation Division (FOM) since March 2012. Previously (2008-2012), he worked for the International Tropical Timber Organization as the Assistant Director, Reforestation and Forest Management.</p> <p>Mansur has extensive experience in managing programs that focus on promoting knowledge management and information sharing activities to support member countries and partner institutions on the development of national forest programs, with emphasis on financial strategies and mechanisms for sustainable management of natural resources. Much of this experience comes from Mansur’s long history at FAO, where he has worked in several capacities since 1984. He holds a B.Sc. in Forestry from Federal University of Paraná located in Curitiba, Brazil and a M.Sc. in Forestry Economics from University of Helsinki in Finland.</p>
	<p>Key Note 2: Mr. Torgny Holmgren is SIWI’s Executive Director. Former Ambassador at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Head of the Department for Development Policy, Mr. Torgny Holmgren became SIWI’s Executive Director in 2012. Torgny has served as an expert or board member on the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Water, the World Water Council (Permanent Observer in the Board of Governors), the European Advisory Group of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and with Water Aid (Sweden).</p> <p>A Swedish national, Torgny has extensive experience working in East Africa, South Asia, Europe and North America. Before joining SIWI, Torgny worked for the World Bank and the Swedish Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Finance. He has recently served as Sherpa in UN Secretary-General’s High Level Panel on Global Sustainability.</p>
	<p>Mr. Abdullah Al Mohsin Chowdhury (State Secretary at Ministry of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh)</p>



Jan Cassin, Forest Trends (green infrastructure)

Jan is an ecologist with expertise in terrestrial, marine, and freshwater systems. Her career has emphasized applied research and practice in a wide range of water resource management issues – including integrated watershed management, environmental flows assessment, ecosystem services quantification, and innovative financial mechanisms such as wetland banking, and investments in watershed services (IWS). Jan directs Forest Trends' work on investments in watershed services, and she has also worked with Forest Trends' Business and Biodiversity Offset Programme to support and promote the use of best practices in biodiversity offsets and biodiversity conservation around the world. Prior to joining Forest Trends, Jan received her Doctorate at the University of Michigan and worked for eleven years as a senior project manager and ecologist for Parametrix (a Seattle-based engineering and environmental consulting firm), and for nine years as a biologist for The Nature Conservancy. Jan developed recommendations to the Puget Sound Partnership on the use of innovative financial mechanisms for the recovery of the Puget Sound ecosystem, worked with the Puget Sound Restoration Fund to establish a payments for services pilot for nitrogen removal by shellfish in Puget Sound, assisted BC Hydro develop performance measures for their long term environmental goal, and led studies evaluating impacts of flow alteration on aquatic ecosystems for King County.



Mampiti Matete, Regional Water Coordinator, IUCN East and Southern Africa Regional office

Before joining IUCN in September 2017, Mampiti spent 5 years as a lead economist with the Land and Agricultural Development Bank of South Africa. She has also worked as a researcher in Economics for IWMI South Africa and previously spent almost 20 years working as a Senior Lecturer at the National University of Lesotho where she introduced the course in environmental economics.




Suzanne Ozment, WRI (restoration – forest)

Suzanne is an Associate II with World Resources Institute's (WRI) Global Water Program, where she researches the design of profitable strategies to protect and restore watersheds. As member of WRI's Natural Infrastructure for Water team, she works with business, financial institutions, and conservation organizations to scope out smart investment opportunities to protect and restore watersheds, and to advance policies that enable strategic watershed management.

Previously at WRI, Suzanne managed WRI's Business and Ecosystem Services Project. In this capacity she implemented ecosystem services projects across six continents, producing research on the interconnections between corporate performance and ecosystem change. She has trained and advised dozens of companies to use The Corporate Ecosystem Services Review, one of the most widely used ecosystem service assessment tools in the world.

Outside WRI, Suzanne has worked in sustainability research at

	<p>the University of Arkansas Walton College of Business and environmental advocacy at the Ecological Society of America. She has served as a Teaching Fellow at the Yale School of Management and a Consultant for NatureServices Peru, the first certified B Corp in Peru.</p> <p>Suzanne earned her Master of Environmental Management degree from Yale University and her B.A. in Environmental Science and Government from Lawrence University. She is a Yale Fox International Fellow and a Kinship Conservation Fellow.</p>
	<p>Claude Gascon, GEF (natural resources/commodities)</p> <p>Dr. Claude Gascon was Senior Vice-President and Chief Science Officer at the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation until 2015. From 1999 to 2010, Dr. Claude Gascon worked in a variety of position at Conservation International. As Executive Vice-President for Field Programs at Conservation International, Dr. Gascon managed 4 Field Divisions and 2 HQ technical Divisions.</p> <p>Dr. Gascon completed a Master’s in Ecology at Université du Québec à Montréal in Canada and his doctorate in Ecology at Florida State University. Dr. Gascon’s areas of research include Biodiversity patterns and causes and Amazonian Biodiversity, especially amphibians. His research has resulted in over 70 publications and 3 books emphasizing Conservation and forest fragmentation in the Amazon, amphibians, and wildlife management. Gascon has appeared in public broadcasting television films on the Amazon Ecosystem as well as in interactive environmental education television programs for US and Brazilian schools. Gascon started his professional career in the Brazilian Amazon as project director and scientific coordinator for the Biological Dynamics of Forest Fragments Project (BDFFP) for six years. Gascon also directed a large-scale research and conservation project investigating the distribution and abundance of vertebrate species in the southwestern Amazon region. This project was the single largest scientific expedition in the Amazon since the last century. Gascon is also a visiting professor with the department of ecology at the Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas da Amazonia (National Amazon Research Institute) and a research associate with biodiversity programs at the National Museum of Natural History at the Smithsonian Institution. Gascon has trained many young graduate students in the Amazon through Master’s and Ph.D. programs as well as during intensive field courses.</p>



Lis Mullin Bernhardt, UN Environment

Lis is an international development and water professional who joined UN Environment's freshwater ecosystem unit in August 2016. A native from the Great Lakes region of the United States, Lis has been working at the nexus of development and environment since 2002. She holds degrees in International Relations from Northwestern University in her native Chicago area, the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies at the University of Geneva in Switzerland, and an MBA in organizational culture and resource management from the University of Reading's Henley Business School in England.