

Joint Statement on Global Groundwater Resilience



We, representatives of governments, institutions, organizations, and partners committed to advancing groundwater resilience,

Expressing our appreciation to the Governments of the United Arab Emirates and the Republic of Senegal for their leadership as co-hosts of the 2026 United Nations Water Conference, and for their efforts to elevate global cooperation on water challenges;

Recognizing that groundwater is essential to food security, public health, ecosystems, climate resilience, and livelihoods, and that accelerating groundwater depletion and pollution can pose significant risks to social, economic, and environmental stability;

Noting that agriculture is the largest user of groundwater globally and source of groundwater depletion and water quality pressures, and that sustainable, conjunctive management of surface water and groundwater is indispensable;

Reaffirming our commitments under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including Sustainable Development Goal 6: *Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all*, and acknowledging relevant outcomes from UN processes and water-related forums; recognizing that the sustainable management of groundwater can contribute to progress across multiple Sustainable Development Goals, including food security and sustainable agricultures (SDG2), health and well-being (SDG3), economic growth and livelihoods (SDG8), resilient cities and communities (SDG11), climate action (SDG13), and the protection of terrestrial ecosystems (SDG15).

Recognizing that the sustainable management of groundwater resources is an important component of national water security, and that the shared stewardship of transboundary aquifers can support regional dialogue, cooperation, and mutual benefit;

Acknowledging advances in science, Earth observation, and digital tools that can support improved understanding, transparency, and decision-making when paired with robust governance, community engagement, and respect for data sovereignty;

Emphasizing the importance of inclusive approaches to safe drinking water, sanitation, and groundwater governance;

Noting that groundwater governance arrangements, institutions, and capacities vary significantly across countries and regions, and that addressing gaps in knowledge, management coordination, and accountability remains important for achieving sustainable groundwater use and long-term water security;

Recognizing that advancing groundwater resilience across diverse climate, hydrological, and socio-economic contexts will require sustained investment across all aspects of groundwater management—including data and monitoring, governance and institutions, capacity building, community engagement, and implementation—and that meeting these needs will depend on a diversity of financing sources, including public and private, domestic and international resources, aligned with national priorities and development objectives;

We therefore affirm our shared intent to strengthen our respective and shared efforts to advance groundwater resilience, including through voluntary cooperation, knowledge-sharing, and partnerships, and to work collaboratively and expeditiously in advancing the following illustrative areas of cooperation:

- Exploring the utility of a shared groundwater management framework, including the scientific data infrastructure and enabling conditions required to support such approaches;
- Developing and expanding the use of data and decision-support tools to improve understanding of groundwater conditions and support planning and management;
- Advancing governance approaches and community-centered practices that can contribute to more sustainable and equitable groundwater use;
- Mainstreaming inclusive and rights-respecting approaches;
- Fostering dialogue, knowledge exchange, and collaboration on approaches to strengthening groundwater governance, institutional coordination, and accountability, considering national circumstances;
- Strengthening alignment and coordination across institutions, partnerships, and financing actors to support groundwater resilience.

We further affirm that this Joint Statement does not create new financial obligations for its signatories. Rather, it seeks to support the coordination, implementation pathways, and prioritization of resources in support of groundwater resilience, consistent with the respective priorities and capacities of the signatories.