

Mission Statement of Water Conference for Future 2017

Commemoration of UN World Water Day: Water Conference for Future 2017

Organized by Japan Water Forum (JWF)

Date / Time: Wednesday, 22 February 2017 / 14:00 – 17:00

Venue: Multi-purpose Hall, First Members' Office Buildings of the House of Representatives, Tokyo

Since “the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, closely associated with domestic and international water issues, came into force in 2016. Unlike the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs for 2000-2015) with the principle objective of promoting progress of developing countries, SDGs has provided a comprehensive framework for all nations including developed countries to achieve the 17 Goals that are interrelated each other. Within this framework, the value proposition of water issues was changed in a way that not only was the Water and Sanitation positioned as an independent goal, but various water issues such as water shortage, water environment and disasters were incorporated into and addressed throughout SDGs.

Under such circumstances, the participation and mutual cooperation of various stakeholders concerned as well as contributions from private sectors, especially enterprises with unparalleled influence in today's economic society, that play central roles in accelerating the problem-solving process are crucial to solve water-related environment and societal issues for the achievement of the SDGs. The recent trend of growing interest in the investment on Environment, Society and Governance (ESG) is also noteworthy. Since the UN proposal of the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) made in 2006, many enterprises have been incorporating the ESG factors into their performance indicators aside from their financial information.

This means that the private sectors' initiatives towards the ESG issues have become part of their business strategies, not just as their corporate obligations and responsibilities. As water accounts for a large part of the Environment factor of ESG, the improvement and conservation of the water environment and the preparedness for drought and flood are seen as active elements in assessing the overall value and productivity of the enterprise. Furthermore in 2010 Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), an international organization based in the UK, launched the program on behalf of institutional investors that requests leading companies in the world to disclose their water-related information of business strategies, risks, opportunities and the like.

Though in the past enterprises were valued mainly based on their financial performance, as the enterprises' mode of existence in the society and their value proposition are changing, so do the society and people's lifestyle eventually. Therefore, we must be able to understand, work together and support enterprises' efforts in addressing the ESG issues, so that we can create a new future society with plenty of opportunities.

While it is enterprise's task to pursue their business with the idea of combining business and environmental interests in mind producing synergy effects rather than merely striking a balance between their business and the environment, such corporate attitude will be highly valued by consumers and investors. We believe this kind of interrelation between the private sectors and the society is indeed a key to build a sustainable society.