Beyond International Development Aid: Partnerships for Water Security and Climate Resilience

Annotated Meeting Agenda

2026 UN Water Conference — Abu Dhabi, 9 December 2026 8:15 to 9:15 – Room Bahar 2, Oasis

Welcome

Speaker: Emilio Pin Godos, Ambassador of Spain in UAE

Why this matters for development-cooperation impact: no single agency's budget is large enough on its own to close the water-financing and water-security gaps. Development-cooperation impact depends on how well agencies and instruments coordinate with one another — combining capital, expertise and delivery channels — rather than on how much any one of them spends alone. The Joint Statement is the mechanism through which partners commit to that coordination.

Keynote — Three Shifts in International Water Cooperation

Speaker: European Commission- Arnaud de Vissanay, Team Leader for Water in the Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA), European Commission

There are three important shifts happening. First, cooperation is reaching further by combining financing instruments: EU grants alongside EIB loans and guarantees under Global Gateway; the IDB's Water Fund and FEDES combined with Spanish cooperation in PortoViejo; donor grants alongside the African Development Bank's own balance sheet in the African Water Facility. Second, cooperation is multiplying impact by combining delivery channels: Team Europe's joint programming, cross-institutional consortia, triangular and South-South cooperation, and standing platforms such as JEFIC and the Practitioners' Network that let agencies negotiate once instead of separately with every partner and country. Third, cooperation is protecting gains already made: Blue Peace's transboundary conflict prevention and the Finnish Water Way's water diplomacy exist specifically to stop decades of progress being undone by conflict, infrastructure attacks, cyberattacks or climate-driven shocks.

Panel discussion

Moderator: Josefina Maestu, Advisory Council of the Water and Sanitation Cooperation Fund (FCAS), AECID

Panelists

- *Monica Corrales, Director of Sectorial, European and Multilateral Cooperation (AECID), Spain*
- *Dieter Rothenberger, Cluster Coordinator Global Water and Sanitation Programmes (GIZ), Germany*
- *André Kölln, Deputy Director Energy and Climate Directorate (FCDO), United Kingdom*
- *Maarten Gischler, Senior Water Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands*
- *Franz Rojas, Head Water Security and Waste Management, Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean.*

Part 1 Benefits & Opportunities of Agencies' Cooperation

- Guiding question 1 (Multiply Impact): What concrete benefits has your agency gained from coordinating with other donors or instruments (delegated cooperation, joint programming, blended finance) — and where do you see room to go further?
- Guiding question 2 (Reach Further): How does your agency combine different financial instruments — grants, loans, guarantees — not only within your own toolkit but also together with other international actors, to reach further?
- Guiding question 3 (Protect Gains): What opportunities do you see for cooperating with other agencies to protect water security gains already achieved — against conflict, or climate-driven shocks.

Part 2 Looking Ahead

- Guiding question — Moving forward: Looking beyond this session, what would most help deepen cooperation going forward — a shared platform, a joint instrument, alignment with a common framework, or something else

Closing Remarks & Next Steps

- Key insights

Juliet Willetts (UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation)

- **Launching the Joint Statement and closing**

Ingrid Gabriela Hoven (Director of the Management Board of GIZ).