

# SDG 6: Target 6.6 Speaker Notes

To accompany the Target 6.6 Slide Deck

- Slide 1: Today we will be discussing the sixth target of SDG 6 - to protect and restore water related ecosystems.
- Slide 2: As defined by the United Nations, sustainable development goal number 6 is to “ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.” Here’s a short video highlighting some of the key issues this sustainable development goal addresses. \*Play video.\*
- Slide 3: Every day, humans rely on water-related ecosystems to provide drinking water, sanitation, agriculture, industry, and more to keep society functioning properly. Further degradation of these ecosystems prevents people around the world from meeting their basic needs, so it is of utmost importance that we protect our ecosystem services if we hope to have them available for future generations.
- Slide 4: Globally, in 2018, slightly more than 2.1 per cent of land was covered by freshwater bodies, although unevenly distributed, ranging from 3.5 per cent in developed countries to only 1.4 per cent in developing countries and 1.2 percent and 1 per cent in least developed countries and small island developing States, respectively. The adverse effects of climate change can decrease the extent of freshwater bodies, thereby worsening ecosystems and livelihoods. (UNDESA, 2018)
- Slide 5: We will be able to track this target’s progress after looking deeper into its components for implementation, also known as indicators.
- Slide 6: Based on the one indicator for this target, change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time, progress can be noted quantitatively and qualitatively. Having a large amount of poor quality water is no better than a very small amount of high quality water, so it is important to track both metrics when assessing this target.
- Slide 7: Spend a minute or two discussing in small groups or as a class, and then proceed to the next slide.
- Slide 8: Some countries such as Ukraine and Uzbekistan have the largest loss in water related ecosystem extent (more than 30% loss), whereas countries like Dominican Republic and Pakistan are making huge leaps to expand the extent of their water related ecosystems (more than 30% gain). For reference, it appears that the majority of developed nations like Canada, Norway, and the United States is making little or no progress here.

- Slide 9: At a glance, the Dominican Republic is a highly-urbanized developing country in the Caribbean region, where only 18% of the population lives in rural areas. In the 2000s, the country received roughly \$200 million in official development assistance (ODA) disbursements to fund the country's struggles, and regularly received around \$25 million each year from 2010 to 2017 (UN Water, 2020). But, funding for the nation has dropped down to about \$2 million a year from 2018 on. Despite the ups and downs of international assistance for the nation, the Dominican Republic has reported in recent years that 71% of documented water bodies have good ambient water quality and the spatial extent of water-related ecosystems since the 2001-2005 baseline has changed by a positive 49.4%. For a country so urbanized, and only receiving \$2 million a year in ODA recently (opposed to \$55 in 2000), it is very impressive that the government has managed to keep the majority of water high quality, and even expand the cover of water related ecosystems by nearly 50% in just over 15 years.
- Slide 10: Although it is not a very steep curve, the figure above demonstrates how the country has steadily increased its spatial extent of water-related ecosystems every year since reporting began in 2005. The majority of developed countries around the world in the same time period have only expanded the cover of these ecosystems by at most 10%, or have had no change. It would seem surprising that a developing country such as the Dominican Republic would be making such tremendous progress with this target when compared to countries like Finland, The United States, and Spain--which have several times the GDP, resources, and aptitude to progress than any developing island country. Examples of a country like this should give the United Nations high hopes that even nations with fewer resources can achieve the same goals that the world at large is trying to make progress with.
- Slide 11: As mentioned in the slide, 6.6 deals with water related ecosystems, which supply a country with usable resources if they are managed properly. Taking care of where you get your water is very important if you hope to have it in the future, especially if you want to keep its quality high. Once water security is achieved, a country can move on to more complex issues like solving hunger, poverty, and creating sustainable cities.
- Slide 12: N/A