

World Social Forum 2024, Kathmandu, Nepal

Statement on Water for life over water for profit

The undersigned organizations, Indigenous Peoples, social movements and water defenders gathered at the World Social Forum 2024 in Nepal gathered during 15-19 February affirm and demand the following :

1. We believe that Water is life. It is a basic condition for all life on Earth and its wellbeing. Yet billions of people around the world do not have access to safely-managed drinking water.
2. Access to water and sanitation are fundamental human rights. Water is a common good, and must be accessible to all without discrimination, under public control and not a commodity. Personal and domestic uses of water, including for hygiene, should have the highest priority over productive uses, such as agri-business and industry.
3. Water policies must prioritize the sustainable management of rivers, lakes, wetlands, springs, and aquifers, guaranteeing their good ecological status, within the framework of the human right to a healthy environment and as key to confronting ongoing crises of pollution, deforestation, desertification, biodiversity loss, and climate change.
4. Water and sanitation services must always be guided by human rights, leaving no one behind, including those who, because they live in situations of vulnerability, marginalization or poverty, find it difficult to pay. Privatization, commodification or financialization of water and sanitation services are a risk to the fulfillment of human rights, and should therefore not be considered as policies at the global, national or local level, as well as in international cooperation, which should instead promote public ownership and management, strengthened through public-public and public-community partnerships.
5. We condemn that water is being traded in the stock market as a tradable commodity like oil and gold. We demand to immediately repeal this from the future markets stocks.
6. Villages, cities, universities, communities, places of worship and faith communities should become blue communities and there by abide by the principles:
 - a. Respect human right to water
 - b. Say no to privatisation of water and promote public control over water
 - c. Say no to bottled water, where tap water is safe to drink or look for sustainable alternatives.

7. We believe and promote Water for life over water for profit.
8. We also denounce the organisation of the World Water Forum in Bali, Indonesia during May 2024, which is dominated by the corporates who are engaged in water grabbing and water trading for profit. As an alternative we in turn promote People's Water Forum which is open to all who believe in Water for Life and water as a human right. We invite you to come and join us in person or virtually in the PWF in Bali during May 2024.

Signatory organisations:

1. World Council of Churches (Ecumenical Water Network)
2. KRUHA
3. India Peace Center
4. World Communion of Reformed Churches
5. PWCDF (People World Commission on Drought and Flood)
6. Tarun Bharat Sangh
7. Jal Biradiri
8. CNI SBSS (Social Service)
9. Faith Justice Network
10.
11.
12. (*More signatures are collected on paper and will be updated here soon*)