

**Call for Contributions**

**Mandate of the Special Rapporteur** **on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation**

**Thematic Report to the Human Rights Council 54th session: “Fulfilling the human rights of those living in poverty and restoring the health of aquatic ecosystems: two converging challenges”.**

**Questionnaire**

**Key information sought**

To facilitate the reception of inputs, the Special Rapporteur prepared a list of key information which he considers essential for the report. The list could be answered **entirely or partially** according to the expertise and experience of those actors willing to contribute to the Report. Please find the list of topics here:

**The global, regional, national or local legal and/or policy framework that:**

* Protects the conservation of aquatic ecosystems, including groundwater and promotes the sustainable use of aquatic ecosystems.
* Recognizes the importance of aquatic ecosystems for fulfilling the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation.
* Establishes the linkages between the human rights to safe drinking water and the health of aquatic ecosystems.
* Recognizes and/or protects community-based water governance mechanisms such as the ones of peasants, indigenous peoples, afro-descendants, and local communities.
* Determines a framework or standards to protect aquatic ecosystems from overexploitation and pollution.
* Determined accountability and monitoring mechanisms to guarantee/promote transparency on the uses of water by large water users (large-scale agriculture, industries (including extractive industries), and commercial uses).
* Establishes procedural obligations and mechanisms to protect aquatic ecosystems as safe drinking water sources.
* Incorporates a rights-based approach to the management of aquatic ecosystems.
* Environmental and/or social safeguards to guarantee that the health of aquatic ecosystems is not affected by external interventions.
* Guarantee rights holder access to justice if the health of the aquatic ecosystems they depend on is affected.
* Regional or national mechanisms that protect water in the framework of the human rights to a clean and healthy environment.
* Protect water rights defenders from retaliation and criminalization based on their activism.
* Minimizes/reduces the requirements or high standards to protect aquatic ecosystems, allowing the pollution and depletion of aquatic ecosystems.

**The global, regional and national court rulings that:**

* Determined linkages between the human right to safe drinking water and the health of aquatic ecosystems.
* Established linkages between the pollution of aquatic ecosystems and the lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation.
* Urged states to protect aquatic ecosystems to guarantee the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation.
* Established the legitimacy of an indigenous or non-indigenous community to manage a water source according to their governance mechanisms.
* Obliged a state to restore an aquatic ecosystem.
* Obliged a private company to compensate/remedy right holders for damaging the aquatic ecosystems they depend on.
* Recognized a river, lake, spring, creek or another water source as a right-holder.
* National and regional cases framed in the right to a clean and healthy environment.
* Applied at the national level the regional legal frameworks protecting water rights defenders (for instance Escazú agreement)
* Implemented at national or local levels regional directives or rules that protect water sources (for instance, the EU directives on water).

**Statistics and Data sources**

* Available independent and official data on the health of aquatic ecosystems to assess the need for restoration or conservation.
* Good experience in applying non-state or state community-based monitoring of aquatic ecosystems.

**Institutions and governance mechanisms**

* State and non-state actors involved in the governance of aquatic ecosystems.
* Governance mechanisms of aquatic ecosystems by state (including local authorities) or non-state actors (including community-based organizations).
* Financial means and budget allocation to state aquatic ecosystems' governance and accountability frameworks (including environmental safeguards to avoid water contamination and overexploitation of water sources).

**To right holders**

* Examples of how aquatic ecosystems are linked to fulfilling the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation in your personal experience or collective community experience.
* Provide examples on how the recognition of legal personhood of aquatic ecosystems has contributed to promote democratic governance and their restoration.
* Describe experiences that reflect the intersectionality among the degradation of aquatic ecosystems, poverty and lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation.
* Examples on how degraded aquatic ecosystems impact groups and population in situations of vulnerability, such as: Persons living in poverty, women and girls, children, persons with disabilities, black people, and Indigenous Peoples.
* Describe how the governance mechanisms of the river, lake, spring, or other aquatic systems provide safe drinking water for personal consumption and use. Kindly provide examples.
* Examples of how the unhealth of an aquatic ecosystem has affected the fulfilment of the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation of you or your community.
* Examples of restoration of aquatic ecosystems with a human rights perspective.