

SUBMISSION FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF BRUNEI DARUSSALAM ON THE CALL FOR INPUTS TO A REPORT ON “TOO DIRTY, TOO LITTLE, TOO MUCH: THE GLOBAL WATER CRISIS AND HUMAN RIGHTS” BY UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Question:

1. Please provide examples of ways in which water pollution, water scarcity and floods are having adverse impacts on human rights. Adversely affected rights could include, among others, the rights to life, health, water and sanitation, food, culture, livelihoods, non-discrimination, a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and indigenous peoples’ rights.

Answer:

River water is the primary raw water source in Brunei Darussalam. Climate change is expected to have an adverse impact on water supply services and pose a danger to the development and also human health.

Due to these changes, the water sources will be greatly affected and its impacts of water pollution, water scarcity and floods on human rights include:

1. Health effect
2. Contaminated water supply
3. Food scarcity
4. Cause infection
5. Water shortages
6. Interruptions to daily livelihoods
7. Water quality degradation

Floods are more prone in Brunei than droughts. In events of flooding, continuous water quality monitoring will be done at the raw water sources, water reservoirs and distribution networks at area which are affected by flood. This is to prevent from water contaminations. The Department of Water Services, Public Works Department of the Ministry of Development also works closely with the Ministry of Health in monitoring the water supplies and ensuring there is no impact on health of the water consumers.

Question:

2. How has climate change exacerbated water-related problems?

Answer:

- Difficulty in pipe repairs (during rainy days or flooding)
- Water quality deterioration. Diminished flow of rivers can increase the concentrations of minerals and pollutants
- Landslides causing damages to pipeline
- Rise in sea water level causing salt water intrusion
- Changes in water level in river/ dams during dry season

Question:

3. To protect a wide range of human rights, what are the specific obligations of States and responsibilities of businesses in terms of addressing water pollution, water scarcity and floods? Please provide specific examples of constitutional provisions, legislations, institutions, regulations, standards, policies and programmes that apply a rights-based approach to preventing, reducing, or elimination water pollution, water scarcity and floods. Please include, inter alia, any instruments that refer directly to the right to a healthy environment and/or the rights to clean water and adequate sanitation.

Answer:

Water resources in Brunei Darussalam is protected under:

- 1) Environmental Protection and Management Order 2016
- 2) Hazardous Waste (Control of Export and Transit) Order 2013
- 3) Water Supply Act (Amendment), 2014
- 4) Pollution Control Guidelines 2003

The Government addresses the water pollution, water scarcity and floods through the following methods:

- Control of development
- Continuous regular water quality monitoring
- Planning ahead before major water supply shutdown
- Proper control of effluent discharge to the river
- Collaboration with relevant agencies (Ministry of Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Health) to ensure our raw water is continuously protected / free from pollutants
- Installation of online (real-time) regular & continuous water quality monitoring stations at raw water sources and at water treatment plants
- Continuous NRW reduction programme
- Water Resources and Demand Study to identify new water resources
- Catastrophic disasters such as implementation of dam safety monitoring system

Question:

4. If your State is one of the 156 United Nations Member States that recognizes the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, has this right contributed to preventing reducing, or elimination water pollution, water scarcity and floods? If so, how? If not, why not?

Answer:

Brunei Darussalam recognises the right to a clean, safe, healthy and sustainable environment through Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6.1 regarding access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.

Question:

5. Please provide specific examples of good practices in preventing, reducing, or eliminating water pollution, water scarcity and floods. These examples may occur at the international, national, sub-national, or local level. Examples may involve water quality and quantity monitoring; guaranteeing procedural rights (e.g. public access to water quality information, public participation in decision-making about proposed uses of water, access to remedies); water use and water quality legislation, regulations, standards, and policies; and initiatives to reduce water consumption and/or water pollution from specific sectors (e.g. agriculture, electricity generation, industry, transportation, domestic use). Where possible, please provide evidence related to the implementation, enforcement, and effectiveness of the good practices.

Answer:

Below are some initiatives practice by the Government in preventing, reducing or eliminating water pollution, water scarcity and floods:

- Through the implementation of National Development Plans for the year 2035 and beyond.
- More infrastructure developments to cater for the country water needs
- Continuous water quality monitoring for raw water source and treated water
- Infrastructure maintenance and operations
- Public awareness programmes on water conservation with non-governmental organisations (NGOs), banks, including through the social media
- Management instrument which include the application of water efficient/ water saving appliances and introduction of Brunei Water Labelling Scheme (BWELS)
- Agriculture – technology used; reducing water consumption for agricultural use.

Evidence of implementation

Establishment and usage of Environmental Acts and Guidelines (existing):

- 1) Environmental Protection and Management Order 2016
- 2) Hazardous Waste (Control of Export and Transit) Order 2013
- 3) Water Supply Act (Amendment), 2014
- 4) Pollution Control Guidelines 2003
- 5) Drainage and Sewerage Guideline 2020 – drafting stage
- 6) Water quality are following World Health Organization guidelines

Question:

6. Please identify specific challenges that your government, business, or organization has faced in attempting to employ a rights-based approach to address water pollution, water scarcity and floods and the impacts of these problems on human rights.

Answer:

There is no discrimination on human rights in addressing water related issues in Brunei Darussalam. Issues are addressed holistically and everyone has their rights on reporting any water related issues with the help of the Government.

Question:

7. Please specify ways in which additional protection is provided (or should be provided) for populations who may be particularly vulnerable to water pollution, water scarcity and floods (e.g. women, children, persons living in poverty, members of Indigenous peoples and traditional communities, older persons, persons with disabilities, ethnic, racial or other minorities and displaced persons). How can these populations be empowered to protect and improve water quality and availability?

Answer:

Nationwide get access 100% of potable piped water.

In a case of water shortages, there are few plans mitigated:

- Water tankers will be dispatched to entertain water requests from public
- Big blue tanks will be put on a strategic locations on problematic areas to help cater the water needs
- Distribute water through bags/ jerry cans

In the event of flooding, the action plans will be carried out by Department of Drainage and Sewerage, Public Works Department of the Ministry of Development where the flood water will go to the retention ponds.

Question:

8. How do you ensure that the rights of environmentalists working on water issues (environmental human rights defenders) are protected? What efforts has your Government or business made to create a safe and enabling environment for them to freely exercise their rights without fear of violence, intimidation, or reprisal?

Answer:

N/A

Question:

9. There is substantial evidence that the actions of high-income States (from high levels of material consumption to high levels of greenhouse gas emissions) are linked to adverse effects on water availability and water quality in low and middle-income States. What are ways in which high-income States should assist low-income States in responding to and preventing water pollution, water scarcity and floods?

Answer:

N/A

Question:

10. For businesses, what policies or practices are in place to ensure that activities, products, and services across the entire supply chain (extraction/sourcing, manufacturing, distribution, sale, and end-of life management) minimize water use and water pollution and meet human rights standards, especially those articulated in the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights?

Answer:

Businesses are protected under the following policies:

- Water Supply Act (Amendment), 2014
- Environmental Protection and Management Order 2016
- Hazardous Waste (Control of Export and Transit) Order 2013
- Pollution Control Guidelines 2003

The increased of water tariffs for commercial use also help in minimizing the use of water.