

EMBARGO: 0600EST 26 September 2024

Mayor of London and Co-Chair of C40 Cities joins Matt Damon and Gary White of Water.org to put water safety, security and sustainability at the heart of global climate action

- **Sadiq Khan takes his leadership on cleaning up London's rivers to a global stage.**
- **C40 Cities are putting water at the heart of the climate action agenda by building resilience and protecting the most vulnerable**
- **London Mayor pledges to clean up rivers and waterways over the next decade**

New York, USA (26 September 2024) -The Mayor of London and Co-Chair of C40 Cities Sadiq Khan will commit to putting water at the heart of the global climate crisis agenda as he joins actor and clean water advocate Matt Damon and his co-founder Gary White of Water.org at The Climate Pledge Summit to address global leaders in New York.

Mayor Khan will join Matt Damon and Gary White at The Climate Pledge Summit later today, to discuss how to build resilient water systems in the face of a changing climate. They will also talk about how the public, private, and non-profit sectors can partner to expand water access and improve water quality even as floods and droughts become more frequent and severe.

The Climate Pledge Summit brings together leaders from across the globe to share progress, learn from one another, participate in deep-dive discussions, and drive powerful collaboration for climate action. C40 already works closely with The Climate Pledge, co-founded by Amazon and Global Optimism, including on Laneshift programme, which aims to decarbonise road freight across major cities in Latin America and India.

By 2050, more than 7.4 million people in C40 cities will be at risk from flooding, potentially costing USD\$136 billion in GDP annually over the next 30 years.

Meanwhile, two-thirds of the world could face water shortages by next year, affecting 650 million urban residents by 2050. This could cost C40 cities USD\$111 billion annually.

C40 has worked with cities across the Global South to help build resilience to water risks, including:

- **Durban**, which is restoring river systems through community-led management programs to reduce flood risk and protect ecosystems.
- **Rio de Janeiro**, which has implemented an emergency protocol using SMS alerts and sirens to direct residents to pre-built shelters during flood events.
- **Dhaka North**, which is expanding urban green space by 70 per cent and boosting rainwater harvesting facilities to manage rapid growth and enhance flood resilience.

Mayor of London and Co-Chair of C40 Cities Sadiq Khan said: "More than half of the world's population live in urban areas which are facing more frequent climate-induced water issues, including drought, flooding, sea-level rise, storms and water pollution.

"I'm pleased to join Matt Damon and Gary White to discuss how C40 Cities and Water.org are

working to address these problems which will only get worse as the climate crisis intensifies and disproportionately affect vulnerable communities.

“We must adapt our cities to allow them to continue to be thriving places for communities across the globe. That is why, under my leadership, C40 has chosen to allocate two-thirds of its budget to cities in the Global South, which have done the least to create this crisis, but are bearing the brunt of it.”

Earlier this week Mayor Khan visited the Billion Oyster Project to see firsthand the return of oysters to the Hudson, following on from his bold pledge to clean up London’s rivers over the next 10 years.

Matt Damon and Gary White, Co-founders of Water.org and WaterEquity said: “As the climate crisis intensifies, Water.org and WaterEquity are accelerating access to scalable, sustainable water and sanitation solutions.

“By mobilising capital through strategic partnerships, we are supporting infrastructure investments that strengthen resilience to climate change and transform the lives of millions by enabling access to the resources they need to survive and thrive.”

NOTES TO EDITORS

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C40 launched its Water Safe Cities Programme in 2019. The programme has successfully:

- Assessed current and future flooding and drought risks of C40 cities.
- Quantified the impacts of climate-driven droughts and flooding on major cities.
- Provided expert knowledge and tailored guidance to cities for implementing water actions.
- Launched the Water Safe Cities Accelerator at COP28 – 19 cities have committed to the accelerator. Participating cities pledge to:
 - Established early warning systems in high-risk, low-income areas.
 - Developed emergency response plans for critical events.
 - Work towards universal clean water access, flood protection, or net-zero water systems.