Guidelines for articles and stories

Basic requirements

- Title and a lead-in sentence.
- Total length 900 - 2000 words.
- Minimum two high quality images (1920 x 800px minimum) – if you have a permission to publish them along with your article or, if they are under Creative Commons License (provide a link with the credits). If you don't have images, inform us.
- If you add images, reference them from the text. Additionally, you can also link to a video, if you have permissions to publish it.
- Include at least one expert’s quote, ideally not a staff member of your organization to demonstrate the impact of the work. Quotes from external professionals provide an important element of credibility that is harder to achieve through internal quotes. When quoting staff, the quotes should focus on supporting the story while being understandable to a non-technical/bureaucratic reader.

Structure

1) Introduction
   a. Start with an introduction that builds a personal connection with the reader, you could also use an anecdote
   b. Transition from the personal story to the thesis of the article
   c. Thesis (Why should the reader read this article / story)
   d. Introduce any (research) project or organization, and if the project or organization has a profile on our portal link to it.

2) Main Argument 1
   a. Quote experts or cite research here
   b. Don’t share your own opinion in this section
   c. Add a photo / image / graphic or chart

3) Main Argument 2
   a. Tell a story on how the above worked in certain (specific) cases
   b. Add a photo

4) Takeaways
   a. How can this thesis be implemented?
b. Provide examples
  c. Include an explanation why these are the best implementations

5) Conclusion
   a. Get back to the beginning, your anecdote or personal introduction
   b. Possibly add an outlook for the issue/research/project/

6) Bibliography
   a. Kindly provide a bibliography using Chicago style of reference.

7) Definitions
   a. If you use technical terms kindly provide definitions so everyone
can understand what you are writing about.

8) Keywords
   a. Provide keywords to increase findability of your article
      i. Thematic keywords
      ii. Region / Country – if your article is focused on certain
regions or countries include the list here.

Criteria

Within the story or article, highlight the role any space technology plays for a water
management project. Furthermore, answer the following within your text:

- Why do you write about this now / what happened?
- Why would people beyond the immediate set of stakeholders be
interested? The fact that a conference or workshop took place is unlikely
to qualify on its own.
- What are / have been / will be the results achieved?
- What is the message, i.e. the most important point you would like the
article to communicate?
- Are there any external parties you could mention, in order to present the
story with external validation?
- Did you also look for a human element, on-the-ground beneficiaries
involved and the tangible impact(s) on their lives?

Voice

The target audience is the non-technical but interested general public. We cannot
assume familiarity with the topic, the project and recent developments. The objective
is to provide enough context for the reader to recognize the significance of the issues
without burdening the reader with too many details.

The story should have an objective tone. For instance, we cannot say something is
‘significant’ without attributing this value judgment to someone.
Aim for consistent, clear, concise, and comprehensive writing in simple English. As you write, keep these helpful tips in mind.

- If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.
- Do not use a long word when a short one will do.
- Use the active voice rather than the passive voice as it is more engaging and easier for readers to understand. The passive continuous construction (“a conference is being organized”) is best to avoid completely.
- Write simple and avoid complicated sentence structures and keep in mind what you are trying to express.

Use short and relevant subheadings to break up longer text for easier reading.

UNOOSA is an intergovernmental organization, so we need to be careful when talking about Member States. For instance, we cannot say that “the environment is mismanaged in country x” – even if we are attributing this quote to a third party.

Use concrete facts, data, and numbers, rather than generalizations wherever possible: “the chlorophyll concentration has increased by 20%” is more interesting and credible than “the chlorophyll concentration has significantly increased.” Indicate the source of the figure, whether internal or external. Ideally, provide a link to this source. E.g. “According to the European Commission concentration in the Eastern Bering Sea has increased by XX% from 2000 to 2001 [LINK TO SOURCE].”

If possible and relevant, provide links directly in the text to related content on the UNOOSA’s Space 4 Water web portal and relevant, directly-related external sites: web articles, videos, technical pages, background documents, etc.

On submission kindly add keywords, names of the region/countries your story refers to, and, if relevant, the SDGs / indicators or targets that the endeavour you write about contributes to. Also, don’t forget to add definitions of technical terms.

Finally, read through your article several times and edit duplications of the same message.