

Issued
2019



**International
Water
Resources
Association**



IWRA'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

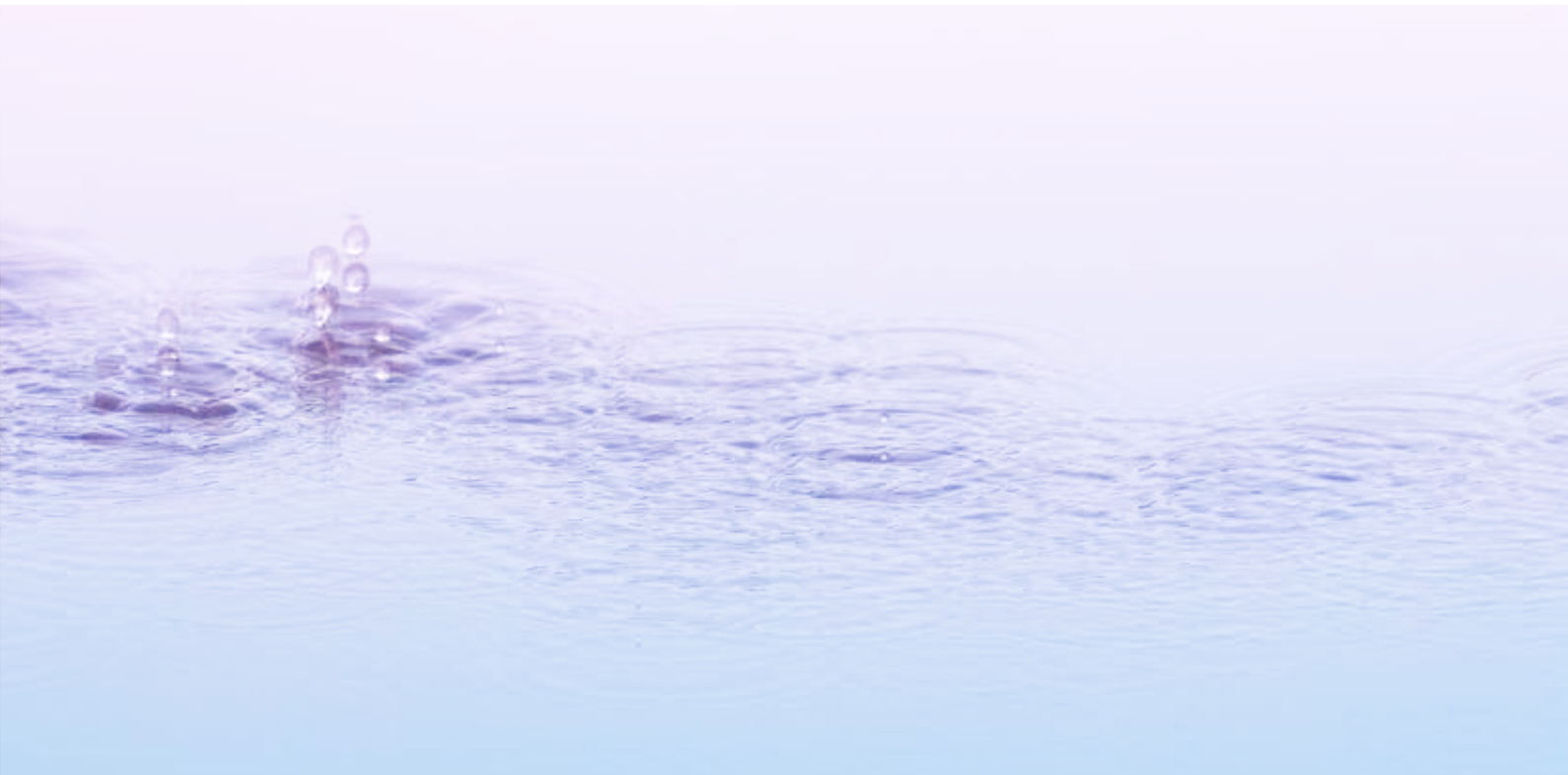
SHORT, MEDIUM AND LONG-TERM



www.iwra.org

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to set out for the International Water Resources Association (IWRA) who we are, what we do and how we do it, in the short-term, medium-term and long-term. It provides updated vision, mission and values statements that will help guide IWRA and its Executive Board in the coming years. It builds on an Executive Board strategic workshop held in Paris in March 2019, as well as comments and feedback provided by various Board members to the output document over the months that followed. We now invite comments and ideas from the broader IWRA community on these strategic priorities as we want this to be a “living document” that will be updated and revised on a regular basis.



BACKGROUND

IWRA's existing Vision, Mission, and Objectives are described in the Association's current [Articles of Incorporation](#), under Article III, "Purposes", as set out in **Table 1** below.

This strategy document is to be considered a "living document". That is to say that it is not set in stone, but should instead be reviewed on an on-going basis, and at least annually by the IWRA Executive Board and Office. It aims to continuously take into account all of the work achieved by prior Executive Boards, to assess what is still working, and to decide what needs to be adapted in the context of a changing world for membership-based associations. Declining membership numbers (especially of younger members) and an increasingly crowded field of associations and organisations are real problems for IWRA. In addition, the advent of the Internet and social media channels pose both challenges and opportunities for our Association. Therefore, one of the main purposes of this strategy development exercise is to identify a way to navigate successfully these new waters. This means going back to basics and reviewing our mission and vision, as well as to identify clearly our values. This will then inform the objectives and thematic priorities for IWRA in the coming year, three-to-five year timeframe, and the longer term of five-to-ten years.

With a focus always on how best to serve our membership, the document will conclude with a list of services provided, the tools and means for providing those services, how we will fund this work, and finally who we will work with to enhance delivery of these services. These lists will continue to evolve over time, which is why this document will need to be reviewed regularly.

Table 1: The current mission, vision and objectives of IWRA as set out in its Articles of Incorporation.

MISSION:	The goal of IWRA is to improve and expand the understanding of water issues through education, research and information exchange among countries and across disciplines.
VISION:	IWRA seeks to continually improve water resource decision-making by improving our collective understanding of the physical, ecological, chemical, institutional, and economic aspects of water.
OBJECTIVES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To lead and influence water policy and governance;• To develop and publicize methodological tools for assessment;• To advance water resources planning, management, development, technology, research and education at international, regional, and national levels;• To provide a multi-disciplinary forum to address and discuss water issues;• To generate, synthesize, and disseminate knowledge and information regarding the relationship between water and related resources and the environment; and• To encourage, promote and participate in international, regional, national and local programs and activities related to water resources for the common benefit of humankind and the biosphere.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

Membership associations such as IWRA have struggled increasingly in recent years to adapt to the rapidly changing world of data and knowledge sharing brought about by the advent of the Internet and social media. At the same time, in the almost 50 years since IWRA was established, the sector has become increasingly crowded with many associations and organisations, all of whom are competing for the attention of people working in the water resources sector. Both of these factors have resulted in declining membership numbers (especially for young professionals) and reduced income streams.

The purpose of this strategy document is to identify clearly the unique selling point of IWRA, and to refocus our efforts on our membership, without whom we cannot continue as an association. This means going back to basics and reviewing our mission and vision, as well as clearly stating our values. We need to create a strategy that will go beyond the mandate of the current board and will set the Association on a path for at least the next decade. It will not be set in stone, but constantly referred to and reviewed as the need to adapt to this rapidly changing world will also continue.



REVISED MISSION

An organisation's mission statement should include and consider some key related questions such as "what it does", "whom does it serve" and "how does it serve them".

Following discussions with the Executive Board, the following revised mission has been drafted:

"To be a cross-disciplinary, membership-focused, international association that uses events, projects, publications and research to facilitate and inspire dialogue, knowledge sharing, and science-based solutions for the sustainable management of water resources across all sectors, scales and communities at the interface between science and policy."

REVISED VISION

An organisation's vision statement should describe its "hopes and dreams", "what problems it is trying to solve", and "who/what is it inspiring to change". A good vision statement can promote growth, both internally and externally. Similarly, a strong vision will help IWRA to focus on what matters the most for the Association and its members.

Following discussions with the Executive Board, the following revised vision was composed:

"To be the leading global platform and community of researchers, educators, policy-influencers, and managers addressing local to global water-related challenges, and improving water outcomes for all."

VALUES

Values describe an organization's culture. They are important as they should guide how you do business internally and externally; resonate with your members and stakeholders (partners, collaborators, etc.); and define your culture and beliefs.

Following discussions with the Executive Board, the following values statement was drafted:

"IWRA's culture is driven by respect, transparency, collaboration and equal opportunity. We foster and value international cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary communication and working practices. We are non-political and care most about the sustainable management of water resources to ensure that they are adequately available for present and future generations and for the environment."



PRIORITY OBJECTIVES/ GOALS (SHORT, MEDIUM, LONG-TERM)

IWRA's main priority is to its members. It is to provide them an exceptional space for knowledge sharing, networking, opportunities to engage on a global level, and career development. IWRA also aims to successfully reach out to and engage with as many people working in relation to the water sector as possible, starting with its membership, with a particular focus on people working at the interface between science and policy. Achievement of these objectives and goals requires both financial stability and lots of great opportunities and benefits for members.

Figure 1 above shows how the previous Executive Board, described the agreed thematic priorities and cross-cutting objectives. This approach identified four main thematic priorities, including the Science-Policy Interface (SPI), which was the theme of the XVI World Water Congress in Cancun. These thematic priorities were then the focus of three cross-cutting objectives, focusing on publications, the World Water Congress and similar events, and communication/engagement channels.

The current Executive Board reviewed this breakdown and noted that the SPI is one of the things that makes IWRA unique, as there is a lack of global organizations sufficiently focused on bridging policy and science. Our membership is made up of people with a variety of backgrounds in water sciences (both hard sciences and social sciences) as well as people with strong legal and policy backgrounds, focussing on water laws, regulations, governance and policy. Having this diverse and yet complimentary membership of academics, researchers and practitioners means that putting the SPI at the heart of everything we do becomes one of the things that makes IWRA unique and is a strong selling point for new members. It was therefore decided to identify the SPI as the underlying context for all thematic priorities and objectives.

Figure 1: IWRA's current thematic priorities and the objectives that cut across them.

IWRA Thematic Priorities & Cross-Cutting Objectives



IWRA works to provide Association members the preeminent global platform and community for knowledge-sharing, networking, global engagement, and career development in the field of water at the interface between science and policy.

In this way, all the activities of IWRA are in the context of improving dialogue and knowledge exchange at the interface of science and policy. This is a two-way dialogue between: scientists using good science to identify emerging and potential trends and policy needs, and thereby inform the development of robust policies; and policymakers incorporating science into policy and directing the course of scientific research to respond to immediate as well as longer-term political needs.

The Executive Board also re-examined in more detail the primary objectives of the Association. For the most part, these objectives are well established at a high level. Therefore, they only required minor editing for the purposes of this strategy document, and in order to focus them into objectives rather than mere activities. You can see these in **Figure 2** below.

The current Board wishes to expand these objectives in order to identify actions in the short-term (12 months), medium-term (3-5 years), and long-term (5-10 years) strategies. The strategies for achieving the objectives are shown on **Table 2** on the following page. This table will need to be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. These objectives will then cut across all of the priority themes selected in the following section of this strategy document.

Figure 2: IWRA's revised objectives in the context of the science-policy interface.

IWRA's Revised Member-Focused Objectives

CONTEXT: Multi-Disciplinary Science-Policy Interface

OBJECTIVE 1

Produce high impact publications for IWRA members & the global water community, such as *Water International*, books series, reports, policy brief, newsletters & other material.

OBJECTIVE 2

Maximise the networking & knowledge sharing opportunities for IWRA members through the World Water Congress & other events & mechanisms to disseminate member's research & work-product.

OBJECTIVE 3

Engage and communicate with IWRA members & the global water community through the website, webinars, working groups, social media & projects.

Table 2: Detailed division of the actions to achieve IWRA's main objectives over various time scales

OBJECTIVE 1

Produce high impact publications for members such as *Water International*, book series, reports, policy briefs, newsletters & other materials.

Short-Term Actions	Medium-Term Actions	Long-Term Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the salient and policy relevant themes to focus on in the short term and medium term. Develop strategies to bring a deeper understanding of these themes through scientific articles, reports and policy briefs. Identify how to involve and encourage members to actively contribute to these products. Our high impact publications, such as <i>Water International</i>, should not only target IWRA members, but also the whole water resources community, in order to help attract new members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Validate the selected themes – is there sufficient interest from members and authors to produce focused publications on these topics? Investigate the possibility of new publication series to complement the existing ones, and launch these. Review our publishing method, deciding which publications are just for members or subscribers, and which should be “open source”. Identify new collaborators to work with IWRA to further expand our product range. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measure and report back on the impact of the work being carried out. Solidify relationships with new collaborators to work with IWRA to further expand our product range.

OBJECTIVE 2

Maximise the networking & knowledge sharing opportunities for members through the World Water Congress and other events, IWRA thematic working groups, and mechanisms to disseminate members' research and work-product.

Short-Term Actions	Medium-Term Actions	Long-Term Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify ways to better engage with our members through the Congress, and similar activities. Identify the hosts for the XVIII World Water Congress. Identify alternative shorter Congress-type options for inter-Congress years, that can facilitate participation from members not always able to travel great distances (e.g. regional events, online conferences, or member-led events). Identify select topics around which to build formal thematic working groups, develop mechanisms to engage IWRA members in these groups, and identify the short and medium term goals or outputs of each working group. Identify opportunities to facilitate the dissemination of members' research and work product (e.g., newsletter, website, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the host for the XIX World Water Congress, and ensure that we have two Congresses lined up at all times. Test run member working group-led seminars/conferences for members and non-members, focussing on one of the identified priority themes. Test run an on-line conference for the presentation of scientific papers on a selected theme. Develop and test a business model that makes thematic working groups more financially self-reliant (e.g. through their own publication series, or by arranging conference-type events). Identify other organisations with whom collaboration will make IWRA thematic working groups stronger and their products more impactful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decide if our Congress will take place every 2 or 3 years, and then plan accordingly. If the test working group-led seminar/conference is successful, expand this approach to other working groups. If the on-line conference is successful, make this a regular series of events. If the working group business model is successful, roll it out to other thematic working groups where there is sufficient member interest to develop revenue-raising products to keep them running. Work with other organisations with whom collaboration will make IWRA thematic working groups stronger and their products more impactful.

OBJECTIVE 3

Engage and communicate with IWRA members and the global water community through the website, webinars, thematic working groups, social media & projects.

Short-Term Actions	Medium-Term Actions	Long-Term Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate ideas, insights, and findings through a range of channels using our membership, publications, webinars, social media and regular media, and projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritise which 3rd party events we will attend, based on how the event fits within IWRA's mission and vision, and how it benefits our membership and activities.• Evaluate the mechanisms that the Association uses to disseminate information and engage with its members and the global water community to ensure that communications are effectively reaching the target audience, especially students and young professionals• Identify institutions, organizations, groups, and other members of the global water community audience that IWRA should target as its audience for engagement and communication• Identify other organisations where collaboration will strengthen IWRA activities and products and make them more impactful.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborate with other organisations where collaboration will strengthen IWRA activities and products and make them more impactful.

THEMATIC PRIORITY ISSUES

The identification of priority themes is the next step in the development of IWRA's new strategy. It is important to choose salient policy relevant topics and to bring a deeper understanding of these topics through all our activities. Only topics with sufficient member-level interest should be pursued, as the member-led thematic “working groups” or “task forces” will be critical components of any work undertaken. To add value for our members and make IWRA stand out as a relevant association, we must either select fresh themes and topics that are on the cutting edge or develop new insights into long-standing topics.

In order for IWRA to achieve a consensus on the priority issues, the Association should focus its efforts on the short to medium terms and develop a framework strategy for pursuing those issues. After this, we also need to achieve a consensus on the tools and methods that IWRA should employ to fulfil its vision and mission, always focusing on services to members.

Where the topic is relevant to a certain country, IWRA could explore developing its country chapters to create relevant messaging, which could then be shared more broadly through our various publications, meetings and

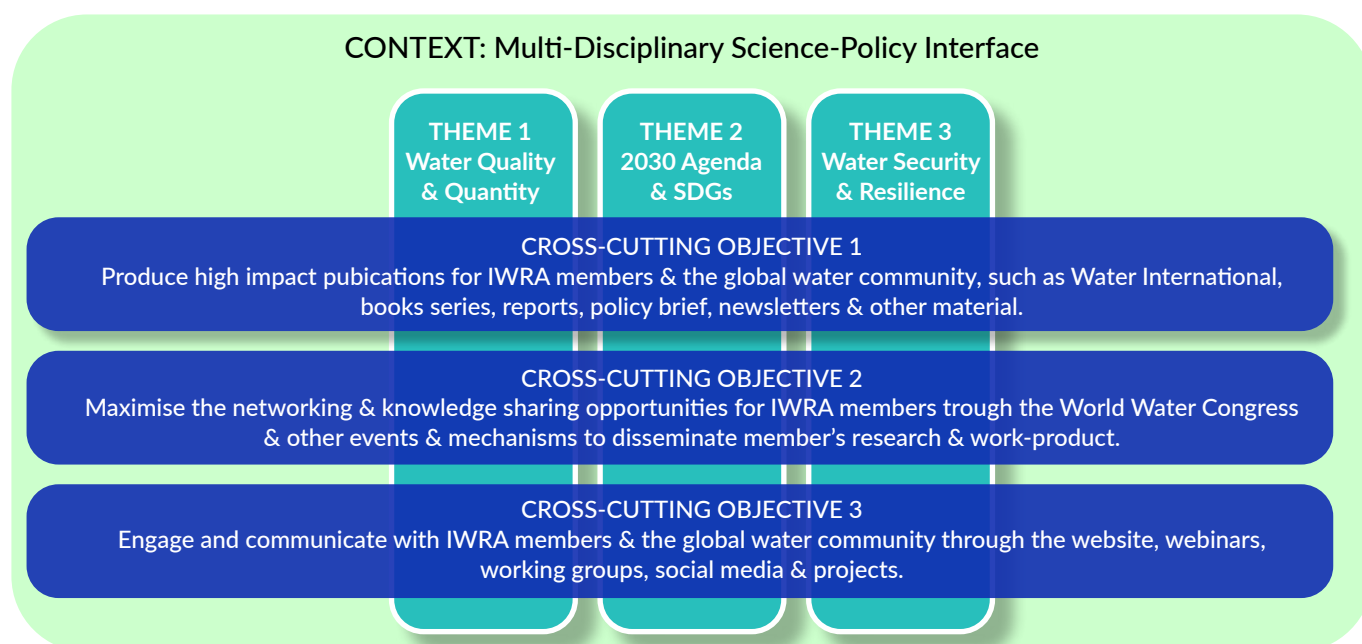
policy discussions. Most topics, however, will have a more international focus, and member-led thematic working groups or task forces can be set up to examine these issues from an international perspective.

Based on the previous strategy, the current Executive Board examined how the three initial thematic priorities could be adapted to the new strategy, in the context of the Science-Policy interface. The interface of themes and objectives is shown in **Figure 3** below.

These themes build on the work we have been doing – including the recent report on Water Quality Guidelines and another report on Smart Water Management – and how they might help to achieve SDG 6. Both of these themes have had operational Task Forces set up and have received funding from other organisations to facilitate the work. In addition, Water Security is the theme of the upcoming XVII World Water Congress in Daegu Korea in 2020 and is also the focus of our ongoing joint case-study project with UNESCO i-WSSM, which will have a Task Force. IWRA is also collaborating on this topic with the World Water Council as a member of their Board of Governors.

Figure 3: The updated existing themes with the revised cross-cutting objectives for IWRA.

IWRA's initial Thematic Priorities & Cross-Cutting Objectives



THEMATIC PRIORITY ISSUES

Of course, the themes we focus on do not need to be limited to these three, and the Board will review and expand on them in the short, medium and long terms. However, all thematic priorities will have to consider the three main types of cross-cutting objectives. This can be seen more generically in **Figure 4**.

When deciding new priority themes, in addition to member interest, it is important to consider existing gaps in terms of what other international organizations are doing, as well as what is possible within the current resource capacities of the Association, while finding additional resources to ensure that the three objectives are being met for that theme within the context of the science-policy interface.

Other themes that could be considered for inclusion in IWRA's strategy over time are listed in **Table 3** on the following pages. This table starts with the three themes on which IWRA is already focussing and offers initial ideas on how these themes can help us deliver across the three cross-cutting objectives. This includes

publications or activities we could develop that would benefit our members and make IWRA a more attractive association for more members to join, and also includes some ideas regarding entities with whom we could collaborate in the sector on these themes. This table is to be revised and expanded in the short term and reviewed annually. Each theme should have a Thematic Working Group or Task Force of IWRA members who are charged with developing the actions/activities that IWRA can undertake around the themes with the goal of developing concrete activities and outputs. For this reason, there should be sufficient existing or potential member interest in any theme for it to be considered a priority.

Activities and outputs could include, but are not limited to, policy briefs, special sessions at World Water Congresses and other events, funded research projects, webinars, special issues of *Water International*, etc. Partnerships with other institutions are desirable where possible, especially where they can bring additional funding.

Figure 4: IWRA can focus on multiple themes, so long as they address the same three objectives.

IWRA's Thematic Priorities & Cross-Cutting Objectives

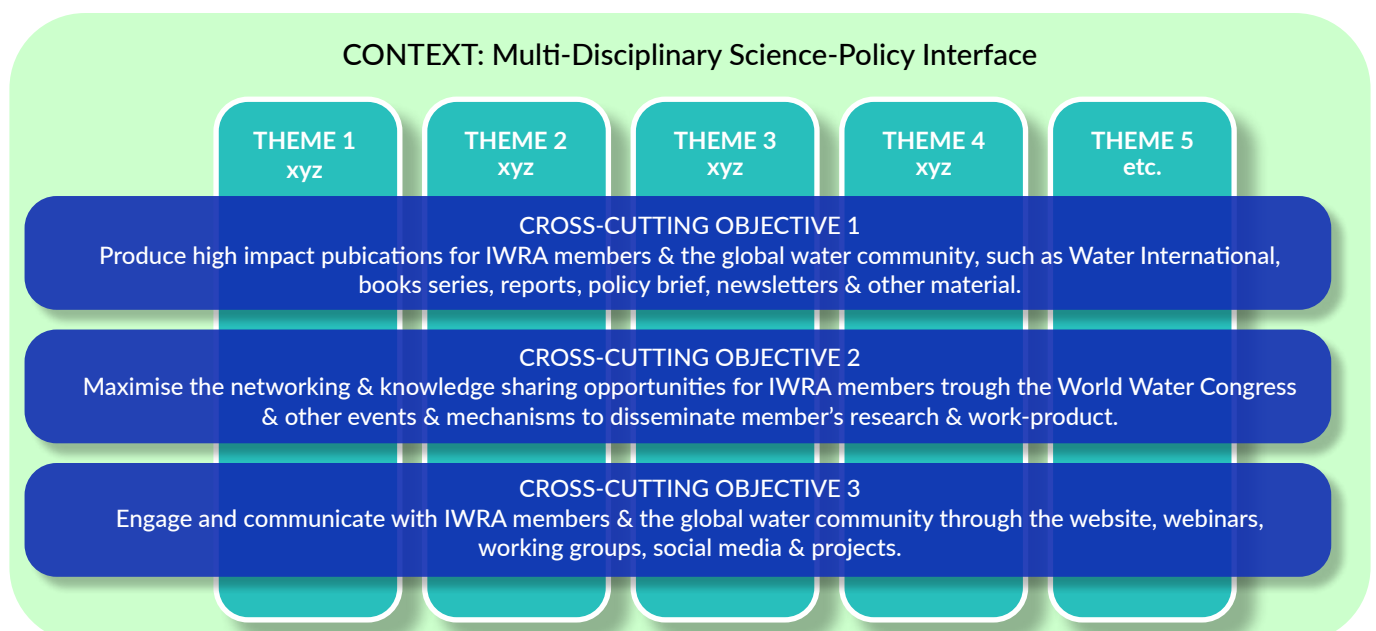


Table 3: A list of **possible** priority themes for IWRA, identifying their implications for the three cross-cutting objectives.

Water Quality & Quantity

OBJECTIVE 1 Publications etc.	OBJECTIVE 2 Congress etc.	OBJECTIVE 3 Engagement etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on Water Quality Guidelines • Special Issue <i>Water International</i> with S2S (currently under way) • Policy Brief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sub-theme of the XVII World Water Congress: Securing healthy waters, catchments and ecosystems • Special Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-establish the Task Force • Webinar • World Water Council • Past Champion at World Water Fora • ONEMA/AFB • Korean Ministry of Environment • Source to Sea (S2S) • IUCN • UN Habitat

2030 Agenda and SDGs

OBJECTIVE 1	OBJECTIVE 2	OBJECTIVE 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart Water Management report had a strong focus on the SDGs • Possible Special Issue of <i>Water International</i>? • Policy Brief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-cutting sub-theme of the XVII World Water Congress: Delivering SDG outcomes: Five years on and looking to 2030 • High Level Panel on the same topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN-Water • UNESCO • K-water

Water Security & Resilience

OBJECTIVE 1	OBJECTIVE 2	OBJECTIVE 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNESCO i-WSSM case study reports - funded • Policy briefs relating to each report • Possible publication coming from papers presented at the XVII World Water Congress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main Theme for the XVII Congress: Foundations for Global Water Security and Resilience: Knowledge, Technology and Policy • Special Session and stand for UNESCO i-WSSM report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up a Task Force • Webinars • World Water Council Task Force • Champion for this theme at the 9th World Water Forum (other themes are Rural Development, Cooperation, Means and tools) • UNESCO • i-WSSM • KIWW 2019 • American University of Beirut • Texas A&M

Climate Change

OBJECTIVE 1	OBJECTIVE 2	OBJECTIVE 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible focussed Special Issue of <i>Water International</i>: Ground water And Climate Change – to align with the proposed On-line Congress planned for late 2020 – following on from an existing double special issue of <i>Water International</i> on Climate Change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sub-theme of the XVII World Water Congress: Building resilient systems for climate change and growing populations High Level Panel: Private sector adaptation to a world of climate change and water extremes On-line Congress for late 2020 on Ground Water and Climate Change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up a Task Force Global Alliance (GAWC) Climate is Water AGWA Pacific Institute World Water Day theme 2020

Smart Water Management

OBJECTIVE 1	OBJECTIVE 2	OBJECTIVE 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smart Water Management Case study report SWM2 report (focus on applications for Busan Eco Delta City?) Special Issue of <i>Water International</i> (currently under way) Policy Brief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sub-theme of the XVII World Water Congress: Adopting smart technologies, policies and processes Special Session on the report & SWM2 High level Panel: Water Related Data, Technology and Capacity Building for Developing Countries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-establish the Task Force Webinar K-water Xylem

Contaminants of Emerging Concern

OBJECTIVE 1	OBJECTIVE 2	OBJECTIVE 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible Special Issue <i>Water International</i>? Policy Brief? Review of National Level Action Plans Propose some guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Session with focus on pharmaceuticals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OECD UNESCO UNEP Texas A&M Oceania Chapter

Water Conflict – transboundary/sectors

OBJECTIVE 1	OBJECTIVE 2	OBJECTIVE 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible Special Issue of <i>Water International</i> with INBO? Policy Brief? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sub-theme of the XVII World Water Congress: Implementing pathways for development and cooperation Special Sessions with INBO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> INBO SIWI International River Foundation Oregon State University Geneva Water Hub

Water-Energy-Food Nexus

OBJECTIVE 1	OBJECTIVE 2	OBJECTIVE 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water for all needs and purposes • Water for Human and Natural Environments • User conflicts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sits under the sub-theme: Building resilient systems for climate change and growing populations • Also relates to sub-theme: Maximising social, cultural and economic benefits • Added value is focusing on the “plus” • Rabi and his supporters • Webinar – focus on “plus” • Special issues • Session at major conferences: Water congress and WW forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas A&M • American University of Beirut • FAO • Germany • K-water • IUCN, Nature Conservancy, etc.

Human right for water

OBJECTIVE 1	OBJECTIVE 2	OBJECTIVE 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible Special Issue of <i>Water International</i>? • Policy Brief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upscale the “Leave No-One Behind Summit” activities with Water Lex • Introduce/manage policy discussion to WaterLex event – first event of the year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WaterLex – Leave No One Behind events • AIDA • UNHCR • Vatican • IWA? (utility level)

Governance

OBJECTIVE 1	OBJECTIVE 2	OBJECTIVE 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Special Issue of <i>Water International</i> (already produced) • Policy Brief • Support OECD report development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side event for the OECD Water Governance Initiative (WGI)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OECD • WGI

Basin Connected Cities

OBJECTIVE 1	OBJECTIVE 2	OBJECTIVE 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible Special Issue of <i>Water International</i> • Policy Brief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible Symposia Day • Special Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Daegu • IWA • UNESCO-IHP • INBO

Groundwater Management

OBJECTIVE 1	OBJECTIVE 2	OBJECTIVE 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible Special Issue of <i>Water International</i> focusing on legal aspects • Book of previous Articles on the topic • Policy Brief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Session on Groundwater management/legal guidelines = added value • On-line Congress for late 2020 on Ground Water and Climate Change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Board Interest • Webinar • INBO

SERVICES PROVIDED

We need to be clear about the services we offer and the value these add to our members, as well as to the broader international water community. This is expected to evolve over time due to changing technology and changing demands from our membership. The lists below are not exhaustive, and there is room for improvement in the services we offer our members in particular. Future focus should be on increasing opportunities for IWRA members to engage with other members, as well as to feel like they are truly part of a recognised community of world-leading experts in water resource management.

Our current services to IWRA members include:

- Access to all issues of *Water International*
- Creating a member profile on the membership space
- Contacting other IWRA members through the membership space
- Discounts to attend the World Water Congresses
- Promotion of recent activities and publications through the IWRA quarterly newsletter
- Opportunities to join member-led task forces, thematic working groups and regional chapters
- Receiving email updates on the latest and upcoming activities, including:
 - The IWRA newsletter
 - Opportunities to engage with IWRA
 - Notification of the latest IWRA publications/reports
- The possibility to produce a “green series” policy brief at no cost
- The right to vote in Board elections and to sit on the Board (excluding student members)
- The right to attend an annual General Assembly

Services offered to the wider water community, but not exclusively to members include:

- Knowledge sharing of the latest research through various media:
 - Congress Proceedings
 - Policy briefs
 - Webinars
 - On-line access to the IWRA newsletter
 - Open Access articles from *Water International*
- The possibility to publish in *Water International*
- The possibility to present a paper/poster at the World Water Congresses
- The possibility for organisations to hold special sessions at the World Water Congresses
- The possibility to pay to produce a “green series” policy brief
- The possibility to sit on the editorial board for *Water International*
- The possibility to sit on the International Scientific Committee for the World Water Congresses

SERVICES PROVIDED

This list of services needs to be regularly reviewed, as well as expanded and modified, within the capacity of the available resources and the demand by members. The Executive Board and its committees also need to review, in the short term, which services are exclusively for IWRA members and which services are available publicly available to facilitate IWRA's mission to share knowledge, to raise the profile of the Association, and to attract new members.

Future IWRA member services in the medium term might include options for discounted additional memberships in other similar associations, such as national water resources associations. In the longer-term members might receive a wider range of benefits, ranging from receiving membership cards and certificates, to increased support for members in developing their careers, such as a wider range of job/internship notices, mentoring programmes and career training sessions. These benefits need to be further defined.

TOOLS, METHODS, & ACTIVITIES

Whatever we do, our primary focus is on how our activities will impact and benefit our members. The list below shows what we currently do. All of these activities are core to our mission “To be a cross-disciplinary, membership-focused, international association that uses events, projects, publications and research to facilitate and inspire dialogue, knowledge sharing, and science-based solutions for the sustainable management of water resources across all sectors, scales and communities at the interface between science and policy”. These activities are intricately linked to our services. Accordingly, we should also regularly review and, where possible, add to this list within the capacity of the available resources and the demand by members.

TOOLS, METHODS, & ACTIVITIES

Currently we are producing the following:

Academic publications – this supports our mission to share knowledge

- 8 issues of *Water International* per year, including both
 - Regular issues
 - Special issues
- Books Series - based mainly on special issues of *Water International*
 - Policy Briefs
- Focusing on special issues of *Water International* (Blue Series)
- Focusing on topics important to members or partners (Green Series)

Congresses – this supports our mission to facilitate and inspire dialogue

- Paper presentations
- Poster presentations
- Special Sessions
- Side Events
- High Level Panels
- Congress Proceedings

Webinars – this supports our mission to facilitate and inspire dialogue

- Focusing on special issues of *Water International*
- Focusing on IWRA projects or themes of general interest such as World Water Day

General communications – this supports our mission to share knowledge

- 4 issues of the IWRA newsletter *IWRA Update* per year
- Social Media
 - YouTube
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - LinkedIn
- Media coverage, including articles published online and in printed press

Task Forces – this supports our mission to facilitate dialogue and science-based solutions

- Funded Projects to produce reports, for example:
 - UNESCO i-WSSM collaboration on annual collections of case studies relating to different aspects of Water Security, supported by an IWRA Task Force
 - K-water collaboration on a second Smart Water Management report
- Expert feedback and commentary on 3rd party projects/reports – offering members a chance to engage on projects they wouldn't otherwise be able to access easily.

There is certainly scope for more funded projects that can provide resources to do more with and for our members through task forces and, more broadly, through other activities. Future activities in the medium term might include inter-Congress seminars or on-line congresses. In the long-term, there might be new publication series agreed with our publisher, possibly through IWRA member-led thematic working groups and/or Task Forces.

BUSINESS MODEL

While reviewing our services and activities, in order to meet our objectives around our agreed priority thematic areas, we must always consider our business model. In order for IWRA to best serve its members, it needs to be financially stable, while also being adaptive to the changing needs of its membership.

The current Executive Board strategy review resulted in a consensus that IWRA needs to diversify its current business model, which is overly reliant on Congresses. While conferences have traditionally provided fora for knowledge sharing and networking, technology and the Internet are now primarily serving that function. Ideas for diversification included additional projects for which IWRA could receive funding and hosting fee-based webinars. The Executive Board and its committees, in collaboration with the Executive Office, will have to seek constantly other ways to adapt to this ever-changing landscape in order to provide the best services possible to its membership, and to attract new members.

How do we do it:

- Adapt IWRA's business model in relation to the Association's evolving role as a membership association, as well as changes in the water sector, society in general, technology, etc.
- Adapt IWRA's services and activities in relation to the Association's evolving role as a membership association, as well as changes in the water sector, society in general, technology, etc.
- Identify priority organizations, institutions, and actors with whom IWRA should explore relationships for pursuing research, funding, networking, and other objectives.

The IWRA Executive Office will carry out a mapping exercise of all recent and current external partners, listing their main activities, our forms of collaboration and key contacts. It will also identify gaps in this network, including potential new partners for outreach and collaboration, as well as services that IWRA could fulfil within its current mission and vision. This network map will become a "living document" and will be updated regularly.

The IWRA Executive Office will also carry out periodic surveys of all members to better understand their current priorities in order to better fulfil its mission and vision.

OUTLOOK

While there will always be challenges to face, the outlook for IWRA is positive. It has a strongly engaged Executive Board, and the Executive Office has spent considerable effort adapting its communication and engagement offering for members to maximise the opportunities that recent changes in information technology have afforded.

This document is a tool to help guide IWRA activity in the short-term, medium-term and long-term. It needs to be reviewed annually by the Board, to ensure that the objectives, thematic priorities, services and activities are still relevant and on-track. The various committees of the Association will be responsible for developing their own strategies in-line with this overarching strategy and for reporting all progress regularly through quarterly Board meetings.

IWRA starts and ends with its members. This new strategy places IWRA members at the heart of all it does. As we approach our 50th Anniversary, it is time to ensure that IWRA remains relevant for the next 50 years.



IWRA EXECUTIVE BOARD STRATEGY REVIEW WORKSHOP

20TH & 22ND APRIL 2021

Two years following the initial strategy workshop for the current Executive Board mandate (2019-2021), a series of two moderated virtual workshops were arranged for Board members. These workshops were similar in focus, but allowed for the participation of Board members in different time zones. Both workshops were moderated by Léna Salame Caillet, and they were attended by the following members of the Executive Board and Executive Office:

20th July 09:00-12:00 CET

EXECUTIVE BOARD	EXECUTIVE OFFICE
Birgitta Liss Lymer	Alice Colson
Eiman Karar	Callum Clench
Farda Imanov	Elizabeth John
Gary Jones	Ignacio Deregibus
Henning Bjornlund	Monica Garcia Quesada
James Nickum	Sung-Phil Jang
Mingna Wang	
Rabi Mohtar	
Raya Stephan	
Yoonjin Kim	
Yuanyuan Li	



IWRA EXECUTIVE BOARD STRATEGY REVIEW WORKSHOP

22nd July 17:00-20:00 CET

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Asma Bachikh
David Molden
Gabriel Eckstein
Guillermo Donoso
Karin Krchnak
Patrick Lavarde
Renée Martin-Nagle
Tom Soo

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Alice Colson
Callum Clench
Elizabeth John
Ignacio Deregibus
Mary Trudeau
Sung-Phil Jang



The purpose of these workshops were to review progress against the current strategies issued in 2019 [“IWRA’s Strategic Priorities, Short, Medium, and Long-Term”](#) as well as to identify actions for the remaining part of 2021, and to make recommendations to the next Board, which will sit from 2022-2024. This review is particularly timely as IWRA celebrates its 50th Anniversary in 2021.

IWRA EXECUTIVE BOARD STRATEGY REVIEW WORKSHOP

The main assessment of the Executive Board during the two workshops were:

- The Executive Board was satisfied with the overall progress and achievements made against the strategy to date. They decided that IWRA is on the right track and should continue doing what it is doing.
- The overall assessment of the past was positive, despite the challenges during the past year and a half with during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Executive Office's remote working model meant that there was no noticeable pause in service. Online events continued and as more members became used to working remotely online, participation in events increased. Only face-to-face events were impacted.
- The Executive Board felt that during the last couple of years, the Association has evolved to be better and stronger than ever before. This includes becoming more member-focused, delivering a new membership structure, and undertaking an increasing number of activities for the benefit of members. These include Task Forces, webinars, project participation, the development of a series of masterclasses, an online conference series, and more. The result is a higher perception of IWRA's reputation as well as networking opportunities and gains with other organisations interested in working with IWRA and engaging in activities.
- Some members expressed concern about the speed of the Association's expansion of the portfolio of activities in the context of wanting to ensure that this growth is managed and not simply "organic". The concerns sought to ensure that resources available to the Association are used to their best potential, and that the direction of growth in terms of these activities, leveraging opportunities as they might arise, do so in a considerate manner.

IWRA EXECUTIVE BOARD STRATEGY REVIEW WORKSHOP

The Current Challenges

Of course, there are still challenges for IWRA as it continues to adapt to the needs of its membership, especially within a fast-changing world of information technology and global events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The main challenges identified by the Executive Board and Executive Office are listed below, along with some actions that could be undertaken to address these challenges.

- It has been more than 6 years since IWRA has formally surveyed its members. It should know its members and their needs well in order to serve them better. Therefore:
 1. The Executive Office should conduct a survey of IWRA members to assess their needs, interests, expectation, and perception of IWRA's value in 2021 as part of a follow up of the membership structure change.
 2. The survey could be divided into different types to target different audiences (e.g. youth) and to assess their needs and expectations and engage with them better in the future.
 3. The results of the survey should be viewed in light of the resources currently available when trying to respond to the expressed needs, interests, expectations, and perceptions of audiences.
- Based on the results of such surveys, IWRA should encourage members to work together toward common goals.
 1. It should encourage work and exchanges between various regions in order to help one region benefit from the knowledge and capacities of another. It should therefore grow in various geographical regions, in a balanced manner, and its activities and services should be “region-pertinent”.
 2. It should encourage work and exchanges among IWRA members, as well as with external groups, focusing on specific water-related fields and topics in order to expand knowledge and understanding of these areas. Therefore, it should continue building on and strengthening its Task Force activities and, if appropriate, consider creating additional Task Forces.
 3. It should encourage work and exchanges between groups of scientists & researchers with policy makers & their advisors. IWRA's mission and identity are relevant to fill the gap between science and policy:
 - i. it can service its policy maker & advisor members in terms of scientific products, and it can feed its scientific members with policy requirements; and
 - ii. it can use its products to help its members influence policy making and address the needs of more sustainable, fair, and efficient use of water resources wherever they are. There is no need to define this identity any more narrowly to remain inclusive and open.

- IWRA's work should focus on activities (i.e. how) and be nimble in terms of thematic priorities (i.e. what). Its services, activities, and the creation of benefits to its members should constitute the core elements of its forward-looking strategy. Themes and topics should be chosen and defined according to "actual" pertinence and opportunities to share knowledge and build capacity in a meaningful way should be present. Therefore, the list of priorities in the current strategy document is only ever going to be indicative, as they are all important. The main question is where, in all of this, can IWRA have the most effective influence through its activities and partnerships.

- IWRA's brand image is evolving and complex. There are overlapping sub-brands to consider – the Association brand (our membership with its academic and real-world expertise therein); *Water International* and related publications/webinars; and the World Water Congress (an evolving brand with each new Congress and related hosts). IWRA should continue to nurture, mobilize, and protect the energy, value, and integrity of these brands by:

1. Maintaining and developing their online presence through social media and online events accessible around the world.
2. Expanding membership (i.e. reach 10.000 members), bearing in mind the geographical balance and relevance factors mentioned above.
3. Ensuring that new "products" are well recognized by the water community as part of its image and identity.

- Today, some perceive the IWRA World Water Congress and *Water International* as being the only IWRA activities (or at least our main activities), probably because they are our longest running "products". However, new and potential partners are approaching the Association about new types of activities. Perceptions are changing in a positive way as IWRA is seen as a more dynamic and reactive organisation, and IWRA should make sure this continues to happen. The responsibility and challenge for the IWRA Board and Executive Office is to prioritise any new proposed activities in relation to current activities and in the context of demand from IWRA's membership, keeping our membership at the heart of everything we do.

- Examples of new activities already planned or underway include Masterclasses, Online Conferences and a greater number of Webinars and Policy Briefs ("Green Series") not directly related to special issues of *Water International*. Smaller Regional or Thematic Congresses are also planned for inter World Water Congress years, with the first one expected in 2022. These activities all aim to benefit members. The challenge with each additional activity is supporting them with the available resources, which is where member support is both necessary, and an opportunity for further member engagement.

- Finally, to ensure both increasing member benefits and long-term financial sustainability are delivered, the Board and Management team are working to review and update IWRA's revenue strategy.

IWRA EXECUTIVE BOARD STRATEGY REVIEW WORKSHOP

Recommendations and Follow-up Actions

- Launch an online survey or series of targeted surveys to members and report the results to the Board by the end of 2021.
- Make recommendations for future activities to the next Board (2022-2024) based on the results of this survey.
- Recommend to the next Board to hold a strategy review workshop in the first half of 2022, to further adapt and develop the current strategy (instead of reinventing it). The Vision and mission were updated in 2019, so it is recommended to focus on membership engagement and brand building.

