



***International  
Water Resources  
Association***

# Activity Report 2023



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# ACTIVITY REPORT 2023

# INTERNATIONAL WATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION

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# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As my second year of presidency at IWRA comes to an end, I am pleased to report that 2023 has been our busiest and most successful year to date. Our XVIII World Water Congress included about 3,000 participants and 12 Ministers and Vice-Ministers from over 80 countries.



The theme of this Congress was “Water for All: Harmony Between Humans and Nature”. It featured 4 High Level Panels and an exhibition of 87 booths. There were 36 regular sessions and 72 special sessions. IWRA’s award-winning World Water Envoy programme also introduced 4 incredible young water professionals to all in attendance, who explored solutions for addressing water insecurity issues in their communities. My deepest gratitude goes to the members of our Board and community, supported tirelessly by the Executive Office team, who made this event possible.

Of course, IWRA’s World Water Congress was not the only activity of note for the year. In January, IWRA also held its 3rd Online Water Conference, this time in collaboration with UNESCO IHP, ensuring that this conference remains free for all speakers and participants, allowing people to attend a conference without needing to incur travel and carbon costs. The theme, “Emerging Pollutants: Protecting Water Quality for the Health of People and the Environment”, highlighted the difficulties in responding to emerging pollutants in the hydro-cycle, including microplastics,

nanomaterial, PFAS and PPCPs. There were 90 speakers and 14 sessions taking place over 3 days. These sessions featured 70 oral presentations, 100 poster presentations, and 4 plenaries. More than 1,500 participants from over 100 countries actively engaged in this

online conference. We also held our second online Master Class series, this year in collaboration with Human Right 2 Water (HR2W) and South Africa’s Water Research Commission (WRC). The theme was “Institutional Responsibility to support SDG6 and the rights to Water and Sanitation”. IWRA has also been busy preparing for the 1st IWRA Islands Water Congress which takes place in September 2024, and will address “Freshwater and Islands: Administration, Collaboration and Innovation”. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

The United Nations also held its first water conference in almost 50 years in 2023. As a result of this conference, approximately 300 billion US dollars were pledged for actions leading to an expected one trillion dollars’ worth of socio-economic benefits. IWRA was well represented at this landmark conference, speaking at 6 sessions on site and another 2 online. IWRA also added its pledge to the Water Action Agenda: “Making water resources research and scientific knowledge more accessible to and usable by practitioners, policymakers, and the public at large.” IWRA has also been actively supporting the preparations for the 10<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum planned to take place in Bali Indonesia in May 2024. Presently, the leading topic is on Smart Water Management,

which links well to our collaborative project with K-water and the Asia Water Council. This joint venture completed its third year in 2023, continuing review work of standards under development in two pilot cities: Busan Eco-Delta City in South Korea, and Semarang City in Java, Indonesia. IWRA is continuing its collaboration with UNESCO IHP on the Water Security Project, the “Global Water Security Issues Paper Series”. A new case study report was released on “Water Security and Cities: Integrated Urban Water Management”, with further reports under way for themes of “Making Decisions for Climate Adaptation” and “Biodiversity Protection and Water Security”.

Throughout 2023, our Chapters and Task Forces have remained busy. There have been 7 issues of Water International published, 8 webinars, and 7 policy briefs released in 2023. Our quarterly newsletter and social media channels continued to update our members, promoting the good work being done by our Silver and Gold members. Our membership also experienced significant growth, increasing from 3,570 members at the end of 2022 to 4,594 by the end of 2023.

In 2022, I set four priority goals:

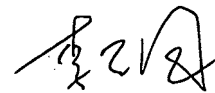
1. To explore and produce more influential knowledge products through the development of task forces, research projects, congresses, case studies, master classes, and more.
2. To organise more high-level and influential activities and events, therefore attracting more people across all sectors, scales, and communities at the interface between science and policy.
3. To continue our meaningful contribution to the global water agenda through our cooperation with world-renowned water resources experts and organisations, and through our participation

in academic conferences, consultations, and with our membership community.

4. To expand our partnerships, agreements, and collaborations with a wide range of stakeholders, to encourage co-operation with other water-related (inter)national organisations, such as UN agencies, national departments, research institutes, universities, multinational banks, and more.

As you will see from the non-exhaustive list of activities set out in this report, I am pleased to say that progress has been made in each of these priority areas. As ever, there is still much to do. I look forward to 2024—to our continued efforts and partnerships. May each year continue to be our best year yet.

Yuanyuan Li, IWRA president

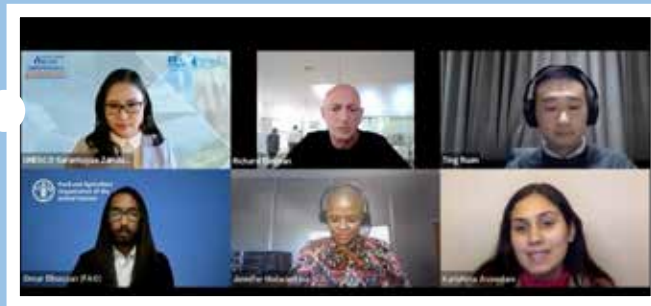


# 2023, A YEAR OF FULFILLMENT



2023 marked a significant year for IWRA. We kicked off the year with the successful hosting of our third online Conference and concluded with the largest World Water Congress to date, held in Beijing. The timeline below outlines some of our most notable achievements in 2023.

**JANUARY**  
UNESCO-  
IWRA Online  
Conference  
on Emerging  
Pollutants, 3<sup>rd</sup> in  
the IWRA Online  
Conference  
Series



**MAY**  
Master Class  
series with  
Human Right  
2 Water &  
South African's  
Water Research  
Commission

**FEBRUARY**  
IWRA Launches  
call for Pilot  
Cities for the  
Smart Water  
Cities Project and  
attends World  
Water Forum  
Kick Off meeting  
in Jakarta,  
Indonesia

**MARCH**  
IWRA  
participates  
in the UN Water  
Conference  
in New York

**APRIL**  
IWRA hosts its  
annual Global  
Networking Café

**JUNE**  
IWRA launches  
the second *Water  
International  
Youth  
Publication  
Mentorship  
Initiative*





**JULY**  
 IWRA holds its annual online strategy workshop with Executive Board Members and Office staff

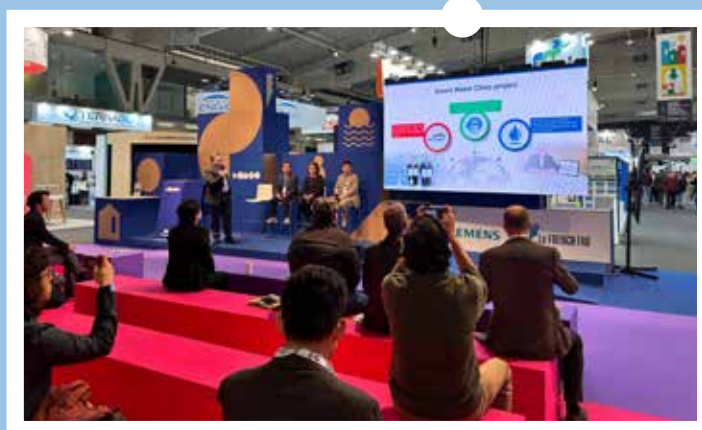
**SEPTEMBER**  
 XVIII World Water Congress in Beijing and 1<sup>st</sup> in-person General Assembly held since 2019

**NOVEMBER**  
 IWRA participates in COP29, KIWW, Smart City Expo Congress

**AUGUST**  
 IWRA launches new Egypt Chapter

**OCTOBER**  
 Call for Abstracts and Special sessions for the 1<sup>st</sup> Islands Water Congress opens

**DECEMBER**  
 Early Bird Registration launched for the 1<sup>st</sup> Islands Water Congress in the Faroes Islands



# OVERVIEW OF IWRA'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS & STANDINGS IN 2023

7 THEMATIC  
TASK FORCES



8 WEBINARS  
RELATED TO  
*WATER INTERNATIONAL*  
SPECIAL ISSUES  
AND OTHER TIMELY TOPICS



7 ISSUES  
OF IWRA'S FLAGSHIP JOURNAL,  
*WATER INTERNATIONAL* PUBLISHED,  
INCLUDING 2 SPECIAL ISSUES



4,594  
ACTIVE  
MEMBERS

5 NEW  
"GREEN SERIES"  
POLICY BRIEFS  
AND  
2 NEW  
"BLUE SERIES"  
POLICY BRIEFS

30+ REGISTRANTS  
FOR IWRA'S GENERAL ASSEMBLY,  
HELD IN PERSON FOR THE FIRST  
TIME SINCE 2020



7 GEOGRAPHIC  
CHAPTERS, INCLUDING  
A NEWLY LAUNCHED EGYPT  
CHAPTER





# EXECUTIVE BOARD

In 2023, IWRA experienced its most successful period yet, thanks to the commitment and dedication of its Executive Board and unwavering support from the Executive Office team. Birgitta Liss Lymer resigned from her position on the Board due to a career change, but the remaining members of the Board remain active and engaged. As IWRA looks ahead to 2024, we remain focused on building ongoing support of our members as we navigate future challenges and opportunities.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

In 2023, the following 8 committees remained active:

### Standing Committees mandated through the IWRA Bylaws:

- **Governance Committee:** Led by the IWRA President, this committee is mandated by the IWRA bylaws to make all necessary and appropriate decisions in the intervals between meetings of the Executive Board, to implement administrative actions, and to act in emergency situations.
- **Awards Committee:** This committee's chair is elected by the membership. It works to select the recipients of the Ven Te Chow Memorial Award and Lecture, both the Crystal and Water Drop awards, and IWRA's Honorary and Fellow memberships.
- **Membership Committee:** This committee's chair is elected by the membership. This committee develops the guidelines and qualifications for various IWRA membership categories and works to enhance membership as well as stimulate and coordinate active participation by members of the Association.
- **Scientific, Technical, & Publications Committee:** This committee's chair is elected by the membership. It works to provide advice and proposals for scientific and technical activities and publications, including Water International, policy briefs, webinars, task forces, and other projects.
- **Budget & Finance Committee:** Chaired by the Treasurer, this committee oversees fiscal and budgetary operations, working alongside the Executive Director to develop and

## THE 2022-2024 EXECUTIVE BOARD IS LISTED BELOW:

### PRESIDENT

Yuanyuan Li, China

### PAST PRESIDENT

Gabriel Eckstein, United States of America

### VICE-PRESIDENTS

Henning Bjornlund, Australia/Denmark

Rabi Mohtar, Lebanon

Lesha Witmar, Netherlands

### SECRETARY GENERAL

Eric Tardieu, France

### TREASURER

Renée Martin-Nagle, United States of America

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

#### Governance

Yuanyuan Li, China

#### Membership

Bassel Daher, Lebanon/USA

#### Budget and Finance

Renée Martin-Nagle, USA

#### Congress & Events

Henning Bjornlund, Australia/Denmark

#### Scientific, Technical Activities & Publications

Jean Fried, France

#### Task Forces & Chapters Oversight

Rabi Mohtar, Lebanon

#### Awards

Lili Yu, China

#### Partnerships and Affiliations

Lesha Witmar, Netherlands

### DIRECTORS

Asma Bachikh, Morocco

Guy Fradin, France

Gary Jones, Australia

Karin Krchnak, Slovakia/USA

Trevor Magwaza, Zimbabwe

Ganesh Pangare, India

Ariana Rossen, Argentina

Dahlia Sabri, Egypt

Raya Marina Stephan, Palestine

Tom Soo, Australia/France

Pilar Carolina Villar, Brazil

Tom Williams, United Kingdom

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

monitor the annual budget, as well as raise funds and identify new revenue streams. The committee reports to the Governance Committee and Board.

- **Congress & Events Committee:** This committee identifies and evaluates appropriate hosts and venues for IWRA Congresses, conferences, workshops, meetings, and other events with the potential to generate income. It is also responsible for developing policies related to the management and organisation of Congresses and other Association events.

### **Ad hoc committees set up under the current Board under the rules of the IWRA Bylaws:**

- **Partnerships & Affiliations Committee:** This committee explores potential partnerships for IWRA with various affiliations, including non-governmental, inter-governmental, governmental, civil society, and private sector institutions, advising and working with the Executive Office on such initiatives.
- **Task Forces & Chapters Oversight:** This committee oversees IWRA's Chapters and Task Forces, setting policy, exploring opportunities for expansion, and ensuring that they function within IWRA's scope, mission, and vision. They also explore opportunities for IWRA Chapters and Task Forces to develop their own initiatives, projects, conferences, and events.

At the end of three years, if considered necessary, the life of an ad hoc committee can be extended for a maximum period of an additional three years or can be converted to a standing committee through an amendment to the bylaws.

## MEETINGS & GENERAL ASSEMBLY

In 2023, the Executive Board held four formal, quarterly meetings online. In addition, IWRA board members and members of the executive office staff participated in two online strategy workshops and one in-person team workshop in Beijing. The team workshop was held on the 10th of September, prior to the XVIII World Water Congress, which took place from the 11th – 15th September 2023.

The 2023 IWRA General Assembly, which was also hosted during the XVIII World Water Congress, marked the first opportunity for an in-person gathering of IWRA members

and partners since 2017. Previous annual general assemblies were held online. The 2023 General Assembly took place on the last day of the Congress. Moderated and chaired by IWRA Secretary General, Eric Tardieu, the General Assembly consisted of updates from IWRA President, Yuanyuan Li, Treasurer, Dr. Renée Martin-Nagle, Membership Committee Chair, Bassel Daher, Executive Director, Callum Clench, and Vice-President Rabi Mohtar.

President Yuanyuan Li expressed gratitude to IWRA members and partners, including UNESCO and FAO, for enabling the spread of crucial information globally. President Li highlighted IWRA's membership growth, doubling since 2022 to include 4,500 current members from 161 countries.

Treasurer Renée Martin-Nagle presented the financial report, ensuring transparency across operations, and Executive Director, Callum Clench, updated listeners on current IWRA projects, including the Smart Water Cities initiative, i-WSSM with UNESCO, other ongoing publications, webinars, and plans for the future.

Membership Committee Chair, Bassel Daher, discussed the successful transition to a new membership structure, and vice-President, Rabi Mohtar, welcomed two new chapters to the IWRA fold: the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) chapter and the Egypt chapter.

**A recording of the General Assembly, and a link to all related documents, can be found online at: [www.iwra.org/how-we-work/#general\\_assemblies](http://www.iwra.org/how-we-work/#general_assemblies)**



## EXECUTIVE BOARD



### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

The Executive Office provides support to these committees as necessary. The committees are made up of both members and non-members of the Executive Board. In 2023, the members were:

#### AWARDS

**Chair:** Lili Yu

**Members:** Gabriel Eckstein, Rabi Mohtar, James Nickum, Ganesh Pangare, Dahlia Sabri

#### BUDGET & FINANCE

**Chair:** Renée Martin-Nagle

**Members:** Guy Fradin, Gary Jones, Tom Soo

#### CONGRESS & EVENTS

**Chair:** Henning Bjornlund

**Members:** Ganesh Pangare, Dahlia Sabri, Tom Soo, Raya Stephan, Fengyue Sun, Eric Tardieu, Tom Williams

#### PARTNERSHIPS AND AFFILIATIONS

**Chair:** Lesha Witmer

**Members:** Asma Bachikh, Gabriel Eckstein, Guy Fradin, Karin Krchnak, Dahlia Sabri,

Eric Tardieu, Trevor Magwaza, Ganesh Pangare, Tom Williams, Lili Yu

#### GOVERNANCE

**Chair:** Yuanyuan Li

**Members:** Gabriel Eckstein, Henning Bjornlund, Renée Martin-Nagle, Rabi Mohtar, Eric Tardieu, Lesha Witmer

#### MEMBERSHIP

**Chair:** Bassel Daher

**Members:** Victor Arroyo, Asma Bachikh, Guillermo Donoso, Gary Jones, Lili Yu

#### SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL & PUBLICATIONS

**Chair:** Jean Fried

**Members :** Jacques Ganoulis, Jie Hou, Karin Krchnak, Tervor Magwaza, James Nickum, Dhalia Sabri, Raya Stephan, Pilar Carolina Villar

#### TASK FORCES AND CHAPTERS OVERSIGHT

**Chair:** Rabi Mohtar

**Members :** Raya Marina Stephan, Xiaojun Geng, Dahlia Sabri, Lindsey Blodgett

# EXECUTIVE OFFICE

In 2023, IWRA's Executive Office relocated to a new central office in Paris. The new address is 22, rue de Madrid 75008, Paris, France. The email address is [office@iwra.org](mailto:office@iwra.org), and the main office telephone number is 33-6-44-20-57-53.

During 2023, the IWRA Executive Office experienced a few staff changes. The current composition of the Executive Office is listed below:

- **Executive Director:** Callum Clench
- **Deputy-Executive Director:** Ignacio Deregibus
- **Administration Officer:** Elizabeth John left the association in the second quarter of the year. These duties were assumed by Awantika Pal.
- **Communications Director:** Leonore Tjikune
- **Digital Media Officer:** Awantika Pal
- **Events Officer:** Andrea Santos replaced Nevena Bakalar in the first quarter of the year.
- **Special Project Officers:**
  - Monica Garcia Quesada continued to work full-time on the on the Smart Water Cities project.
  - Sung-Phil Jung continued to work full-time on the Smart Water Cities project until his secondment from K-water came to an end in December.
  - Mary Trudeau continued to work part-time on the UNESCO i-WSSM project and took over part of Ignacio's duties as Deputy Executive Director during his paternal leave.
- **Policy Brief Officers:** Claire Miller and Kara DiFrancesco left the association. Kris Hartley continued to work part-time editing and drafting policy briefs. He was joined by Regina M. Buono.
- **Webinar Officers:** Lindsey Blodgett and Arturo Salazar continued to organise webinars on a part-time basis.
- **Graphic Designer:** Nathalie Lyon-Caen continued to assist in the graphic design of IWRA's reports and media products on a part-time basis.



- **Webmaster:** Sergio Vallejo continued to ensure the security of all IWRA websites and databases for congresses and conferences on a part-time basis.

As the IWRA Executive Office continues to operate under a remote working model, the full-time team operates across Italy, Nepal, Portugal, South Africa, and Spain. The part-time members of the team are spread across Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Hong Kong, and the USA. The geographic spread of our Executive Office team mirrors the geographically diverse Executive Board itself, emphasising also the international and diverse nature of the Association and its members.

# IWRA MEMBERSHIP



## STEADY GROWTH IN MEMBERSHIP

In 2023, we actively engaged in promoting memberships and encouraging upgrades within our network, at international events, and through targeted social media campaigns. As a result of these strategic endeavours, our membership experienced significant growth, increasing from 3,570 members at the end of 2022 to 4,594 by the end of 2023. Additionally, we received one new gold partnership member from Zambia.

Presently, our association boasts a total of 140 Gold Members, 302 Silver Members, and 4,152 Bronze Members. In the future, our outreach efforts will focus on upgrading our membership platforms and targeting external organisations and institutions to join our community as silver/gold partners.

## MEMBERSHIP GRANTS

During the first quarter of the year, IWRA announced the recipients of membership grants sponsored by our esteemed organisational members. Thanks to the generous support from our Gold and Silver Partners, we were able to extend Membership Grants to 38 applicants in 2023.

We express our heartfelt gratitude to our Gold Partner Organisations: IWRA China Chapter, French Water Partnership, the Energy and Water Agency of Malta, Pacific Institute, and Société Wallonne des Eaux, who each sponsored six participants. Additionally, we appreciate the sponsorship from our Silver Partner Organisations: Deltares, International Network of Basin Organisations, Texas Water Resources Institute, Texas A&M University, and Patricia Makhesha, who each supported two participants.

A membership grant provides a complimentary 12-month silver membership to water enthusiasts globally who may face financial constraints otherwise. These benefits include voting rights, eligibility to run for the Executive Board, and the opportunity to lead a Task Force/Working Group. The total number of IWRA Membership Grants offered each year is determined by the total number of Gold and Silver institutional members. The grant is facilitated through an application process, and the Membership Committee reviews all applications and allocates grants. IWRA plans to launch a second call for applications in 2024.

**To learn more about the recipients of the 2023 IWRA Membership Grants, click here: [www.iwra.org/iwra-membership-grants-recipients-2023](http://www.iwra.org/iwra-membership-grants-recipients-2023)**

## MEMBERSHIP PACKAGES

<p><b>BRONZE MEMBERSHIP</b> <b>FREE</b></p>	<p>Bronze Membership offers a complimentary and unrestricted membership option for those individuals wanting to stay updated on IWRA's activities with and obtain minimal benefits at no financial cost.</p> <p><b>BRONZE MEMBERS CAN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receive newsletters and updates through our IWRA mailing list.</li> <li>• Join Task Forces and Chapters as participants.</li> <li>• Access some "members only" content through the Membership platform.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SILVER MEMBERSHIP</b> <b>65 USD/YEAR</b></p>	<p>Silver Membership is aimed at anyone seeking a full IWRA experience. Silver Members can network, become involved in our activities, and are also given the opportunity to leverage their membership to advance careers and reputations, even gaining a lead role in IWRA activities.</p> <p><b>SILVER MEMBERS RECEIVE THE BENEFITS OF BRONZE MEMBERSHIP, AS WELL AS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain access to <i>Water International</i></li> <li>• Gain voting privileges for IWRA elections</li> <li>• Sit on a Task Force or Chapter Bureau</li> <li>• Run for election to the Executive Board</li> <li>• Lead or propose Webinars or Policy Briefs outside of Task Forces</li> <li>• Promote activities and publications through the IWRA network</li> <li>• Access exclusive content for paying members only (in the first year following IWRA events).</li> </ul>
<p><b>GOLD MEMBERSHIP</b> <b>165 USD/YEAR</b></p>	<p>Gold membership is tailored at members seeking a "Premier" experience and who are planning to attend or participate in IWRA events. This membership offers registration discounts and grants access to many exclusive IWRA events.</p> <p><b>GOLD MEMBERS RECEIVE THE BENEFITS OF SILVER MEMBERSHIP, AS WELL AS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receive discounts to all IWRA Congresses and Conferences</li> <li>• Receive invitations to President's reception at Congress</li> <li>• Receive invitations to at least one online "Gold event" a year</li> <li>• Receive invitations to attend in-person board meetings or workshops</li> </ul>
<p><b>SILVER PARTNERSHIP</b> <b>550 USD/YEAR</b></p>	<p>Silver partnerships offer an affordable level of membership to small and non-profit organisations that want to actively engage with IWRA members on activities and at events, and who are looking to promote their own activities across the IWRA network.</p> <p><b>SILVER PARTNER ORGANISATIONS CAN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include 2 Gold or 5 Silver Individual sub-members (and receive all relevant benefits).</li> <li>• Promote joint activities and institutional activities to IWRA membership.</li> <li>• List job opportunities on the membership space.</li> <li>• Be listed as an IWRA Partner Organisation on the IWRA website.</li> <li>• Receive 20% discount off any additional individual membership, for up to 150 members.</li> <li>• Become the recognised sponsor of 2 Silver annual memberships for people on low incomes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>GOLD PARTNERSHIP</b> <b>1500 USD/YEAR</b></p>	<p>Gold partnerships offer memberships to larger organisations that want expand their representatives for active engagement with IWRA members, particularly at events like the Congress, and who would like to promote their activities across the IWRA network.</p> <p><b>GOLD PARTNER ORGANISATION CAN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include 6 Gold or 15 Silver Individual sub-members (and receive all relevant benefits).</li> <li>• Promote joint activities and institutional activities to IWRA membership.</li> <li>• List job opportunities on the membership space.</li> <li>• Receive a preferential rate on a World Water Congress stand or space on a IWRA stand.</li> <li>• Benefit from high visibility advertising on the IWRA website and through our newsletters.</li> <li>• Be listed as an IWRA Partner Organisation on the IWRA website.</li> <li>• Receive 20% discount off any additional individual membership, for up to 150 members.</li> <li>• Become the recognised sponsor of 6 Silver annual memberships for people on low incomes.</li> </ul>

**TASK FORCES**

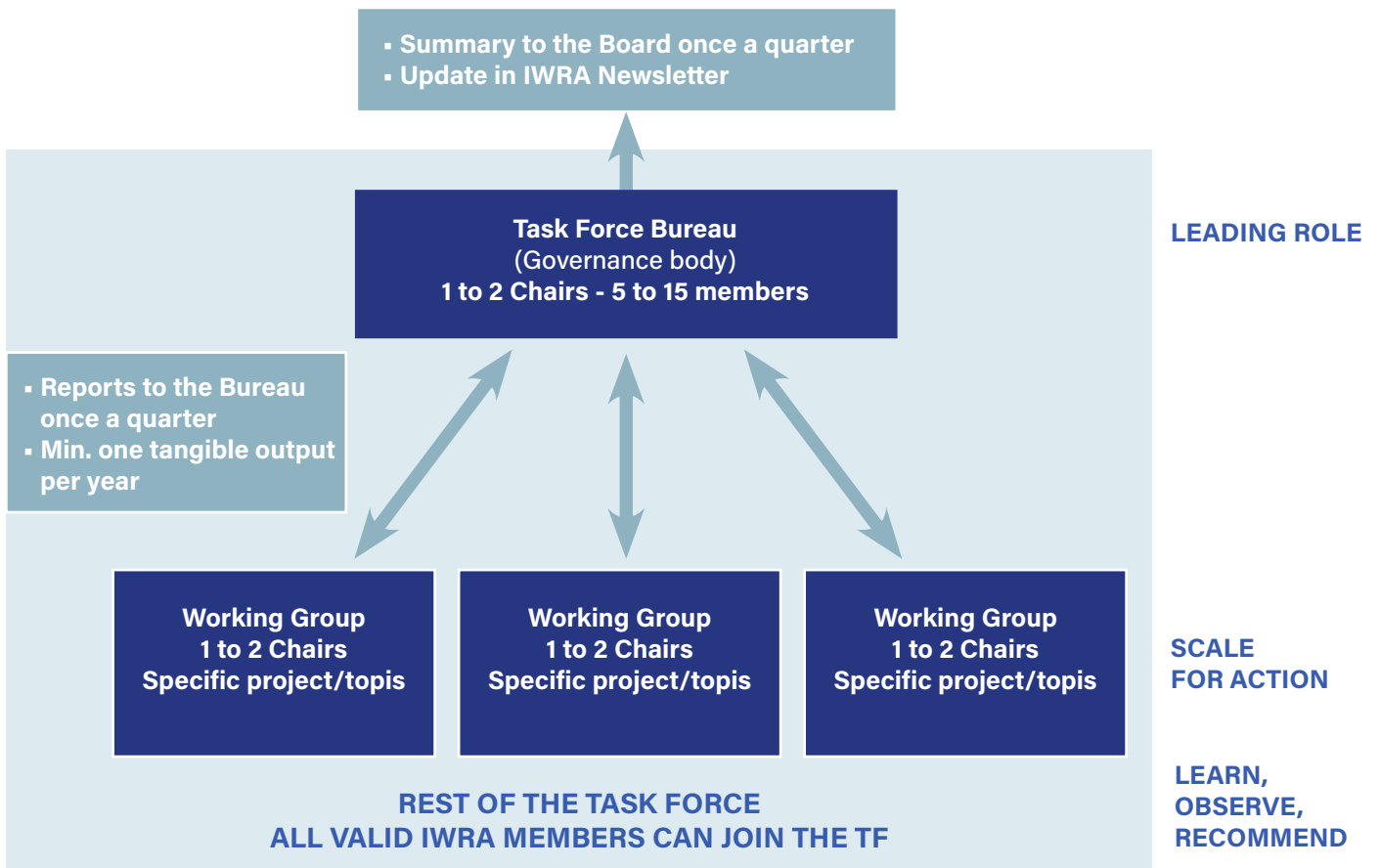
Like in 2022, 2023 proved to be a productive year for IWRA Task Forces. These Task Forces are led by IWRA Silver or Gold members and enable different Working Groups to focus on important subthemes related to water (e.g., Climate Change, Water and Energy under Water & Climate Change Task Force) as well as specific deliverables, such as webinars, policy briefs, training, etc. They also enable growth or development of specific activities, including communications, partnerships, and recruitments.

The existing Task Forces, such as the Early Career & Young Professionals, Groundwater, Water & Climate Change, and Water Security, consolidated themselves and made excellent progress toward developing a unified governance, structure, and plan for activities.

The main highlights from the various Task Forces for 2023 are as follows:

- **Early Career & Young Professionals:** In 2023, Rewa Assi replaced Bassel Daher as the Chair of this Task Force. Members actively managed social media and outreach, as well as organised webinars, engagement, and mentorship programmes with the explicit aim to help leverage the career development and visibility of Young and Early Career Professionals. The task force also started a new podcast series on X (formerly Twitter) called, "WaterSpeaks".
- **Groundwater:** Co-chaired by Amy Hardberger and Alice Aureli, this Task force continued to engage in the following thematic working groups: (a) Climate Change, (b) Surface-Water Groundwater Interactions, (c) Governance, Policy, and Transboundary Aquifers, and (d) Groundwater Quality & Pollution. These working groups join the current Bureau in activities focused on (i) Capacity Building, (ii) Communication and Partnership, and (iii) Special Events.

**THE STRUCTURE OF IWRA TASK FORCES REMAINS AS FOLLOWS**



## IWRA MEMBERSHIP

- **Smart Water Management:** Chaired by Kola Kareem, this Task Force hosted a webinar titled “Smart One Water: Lessons on Smart Water Management from IWRA Task Force Members” in March. The webinar presented four cases that illustrated the use of smart water management techniques in smart water metering, wastewater membrane technology, circular economy for water reuse and recovery, and current practices of smart and intelligent water supply in the USA and Pakistan, as well as globally. The speakers included Alaafi Almoatasem, a PhD Researcher at the International Water Research Institute (IWRI), Neil S. Grigg, Professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Colorado State University, Dahlia Sabri, Board Director, International Water Resources Association, and Nusrat Yaqoob, a PhD Fellow at the University of Karachi. The webinar was moderated by Kareem Kola.
- **Water and Climate Change:** After implementing a new 2-year chair rotation schedule, David Molden has stepped down from his role as chair, which he has had since the Water & Climate Change Task Force was established. Raya Stephan is now joined by Gauravjeet Singh, an active member of the Task Force, who co-chairs the Water Pollution Working Group, and the Nature-Based Solution Working Group, as co-chairs. In 2023, the task force organised its first webinar, “Water and Climate Change: A Holistic Approach” (6 June). Members of the task force also successfully organised a special session at the XVIII World Water Congress in Beijing and is also preparing a Special Issue for Water International. Some of the accepted articles prepared by the Water Pollution Working Group and the Nature-Based Solution Working Group are already online.
- **Water Quality:** Co-chaired by Sisira Withanachchi and Dahlia Sabri, this task force continued to carry out its work around making meaningful contributions to Water Quality. Their focus is to help scope the development of future projects related to water quality.
- **Water Security:** Chaired by Amgad Elmahdi, this task force contributed significantly to the work and activities of UNESCO’s i-WSSM reports based on the GWSI Paper Series, led by Mary Trudeau. Read more below in the project updates section of this report.
- **Land4flood:** Co-chaired by Lenka Slavíková and Thomas Hartmann, this task force organised its latest Land4Flood conference in Dortmund, Germany, from September 27 to 29, 2023. The conference was hosted by the “Land policy and Land Management” research group, part of the Department of Spatial Planning at the TU Dortmund University. The focus of the conference was on land as a biophysical system (including hydrological aspects) and socio-economic resource, as well as a solution to flood risk management.



Land4Flood conference in Dortmund, Germany, September, 2023

To learn more about these task forces, please visit:  
[www.iwra.org/task-forces](http://www.iwra.org/task-forces)







## GEOGRAPHIC CHAPTERS

IWRA oversaw 7 national and regional chapters, namely in China, Oceania, Japan, India, Mongolia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Egypt. To ensure consistency in how IWRA interacts with its different groups, Chapters are now managed like Task Forces, with similar structures and obligations. Each Chapter will have to constitute its Bureau and report to the Executive Office and Board a minimum of once per quarter. Additionally, each Chapter will have to deliver on at least one outcome per year.

In 2023, IWRA's current Chapters have continued to promote the exchange of knowledge and experience across regions and countries. They also further implemented the Association's mission and key activities, building an extensive regional network of IWRA members and partners.

### CHINA

In 2023, the China Chapter successfully led the preparation and organisation of the XVIII World Water Congress, titled, "Water for All: Harmony between Humans and Nature," which took place in Beijing (11-15 September 2023). The China Chapter is the largest IWRA Chapter, consisting of nearly 350 active members. It is chaired by IWRA President, Yuanyuan Li at the General Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Planning and Design of the Ministry of Water Resources (GIWP).

### JAPAN

In 2023, the Japan Chapter continued to engage in discussions and plans to create a robust network in the region and supported national and international related IWRA events and publications. Kaoru Takara, IWRA Board of Directors (2013-2015), continued to Chair the Chapter. In a ceremony held on 30 November at the headquarters

of Pacific Consultants Co., Inc. in Tokyo, Prof. Kuniyoshi Takeuchi, former IWRA Vice-President, handed the prestigious 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Award plaque awarded to the late Professor Hiroshi Hori to Pacific Consultants President Omoto Also. In attendance were Professors Kaoru Takara, Chair of the Japan Chapter of IWRA, and James E. Nickum, Editor-in-Chief of Water International, Past Vice-president of IWRA.

IWRA recognised and celebrated Hiroshi Hori's contribution to the Association by awarding him, posthumously, a 50<sup>th</sup> IWRA Anniversary Award. This award acknowledged his dedication to expanding the association's legacy and impact. Hiroshi Hori left an endowment fund to IWRA, "The Toyoko and Hiroshi Hori Education Fund", which provides support in the form of IWRA memberships for promising scholars from developing economies, especially those designated by the OECD as 'least developed'.



## INDIA

In 2023, IWRA worked closely with the India Chapter to finalise a new memorandum of understanding.

## OCEANIA

In 2023, the Oceania Chapter continued its engagement in supporting and fostering IWRA's membership base, knowledge exchange, and networking opportunities in Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands.

## MONGOLIA

IWRA's Mongolia Chapter, co-chaired by Nomundari Erdene, hosted its first special session during the XVIII World Water Congress in Beijing, China. The session titled, "Blue Horizons Mongolia: Pioneering Sustainable Urban Water Projects," showcased their remarkable work. Speakers included Nomundari Erdene, Assistant Project Manager, Hydraulic Engineer, Tetrattech LLC., Tsetsee Tulgaa, Sustainability Specialist at Millennium Challenge Account Mongolia, and Ayurzana Badarch, Lecturer at the Mongolian University of Science and Technology, presented on Flood Mitigation Measures and Model Development.



## LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN (LAC)

IWRA LAC Chapter Chair, Guillermo Donoso Harris, represented IWRA at the CEPAL/ECLAC Diálogos Regionales del Agua (Regional Water Dialogues 2023) that took place in ECLAC, Santiago de Chile, on 1 February to 3 February 2023. The event was part of the regional preparatory process for the UN Water Conference 2023, which aims to assess progress related to SDG 6 (water and sanitation) in the framework of the "mid-term comprehensive review of the activities of the International

Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" (2018-2028) and launch a regional water action agenda.



Guillermo Donoso provided valuable comments in the session, "Water valuation and governance mechanisms in basins in Latin America and the Caribbean". He also emphasised the need for a paradigm shift in water management and provided the following recommendations: first, we must collectively annul the notion that decisions about water are made through objective logic without the obstacles of subjective values in collective management. Second, we must learn how our values are connected to water and apply an ethically-informed decision process to the broader domain of our human-nature interactions.

## EGYPT

In 2023, IWRA announced the launch of its Egypt Chapter, led by Dr. Dahlia Sabri, IWRA Executive Board Director. This chapter aims to facilitate knowledge exchange, collaboration, and networking opportunities among water professionals in Egypt.

## CHAPTERS IN DEVELOPMENT

The Executive Office continues to work toward establishing new Chapters in Africa.

**To learn more about the task forces, visit:**  
[www.iwra.org/geographic-chapters](http://www.iwra.org/geographic-chapters)

# WORLD WATER CONGRESSES

## XVIII WORLD WATER CONGRESS



### XVIII World Water Congress

International Water Resources Association (IWRA)  
Beijing, China | September 11-15, 2023

The XVIII World Water Congress, jointly hosted by the Ministry of Water Resources (MWR) of the People's Republic of China and the International Water Resources Association (IWRA) in Beijing, China, came to a successful close on 15 September 2023. This remarkable event brought together over 2,000 registered attendees, ranging from experts, scholars, 36 international organisations, and delegates from across 83 countries and regions.

Throughout the Congress, numerous sessions, including 4 High-level plenary sessions, 36 Regular sessions, 74 Special sessions, and 15 Side events, were held, covering 6 sub-themes and 44 topics. More than 130 papers were presented and over 80 exhibitions related to water-related issues were organised. The congress highlighted the importance of inclusive development, multilateral cooperation, and successful water governance experiences in achieving the water-related goals of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Collective efforts and international collaboration are instrumental for addressing water challenges and building a sustainable and water-secure future for all.

Overall, the Congress recognised the irreplaceable nature of water in the birth, evolution, and long-term sustainable development of human society. It emphasised that the protection and rational use of water resources are a shared responsibility and one that transcends borders. The scarcity of freshwater poses a significant constraint on economic, social, and ecological health. The major

output of the congress, the Beijing Declaration, called on individuals, organisations, enterprises, industries, countries, and regions to prioritise the conservation and rational utilisation of water, committing to best practices in water resource development. Water efficiency and effectiveness is a prerequisite for fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals. The Declaration highlights the imperative for collaborative global action, transcending boundaries, and the uniting of humanity in the pursuit of a greener, peaceful, more sustainable world.

### XVIII WORLD WATER CONGRESS STATISTICS

**Almost 3000 REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS** from more than **70 COUNTRIES**

**More than 100 SPEAKERS and MODERATORS**

**A total of 113 DISTINCT SESSIONS held over 5 DAYS, including:**

- 4 High-Level Panel sessions
- 36 Regular Sessions
- 73 Special Sessions
- 14 Side Events
- 278 Poster presentations
- 96 Exhibitors

To learn more about visit

[www.iwra.org/aboutcongresses/#past\\_congresses](http://www.iwra.org/aboutcongresses/#past_congresses)

## XVIII WORLD WATER CONGRESS THEMES

**Six themes were addressed as critical for achieving  
*Water for All: Harmony between Humans and Nature***

### **1. Water-Human-Economy-Ecology Nexus under a Changing Environment**

- 1.1 Rules and mechanisms of natural hydrological cycling and socio-economic water cycling evolution under climate change
- 1.2 Vulnerability and adaptability of water-land-energy-food nexus
- 1.3 Balanced and coordinated development of water-economy-ecology system
- 1.4 Water security challenges in key regions
- 1.5 Water security assessment and risk management
- 1.6 Water security, human development, and economic growth linkages
- 1.7 Climate-induced risks in irrigation and water supply

### **2. Promoting Water Efficiency, Productivity and Services**

- 2.1 Water supply and demand management
- 2.2 Water use efficiency and productivity improvement through scientific, technical, economic, and educational means
- 2.3 Agricultural/Irrigation water and other rural water systems for livelihood improvement
- 2.4 Wastewater treatment and reuse
- 2.5 Water pricing and water rights reforms
- 2.6 Covid-19 and safe drinking water
- 2.7 Water services and water service providers

### **3. Building Resilience for Disaster Prevention and Mitigation**

- 3.1 Prevention and mitigation of extreme weather induced water-related disasters
- 3.2 Development of flood control projects
- 3.3 Nature-based Solutions for water-related disaster prevention and mitigation
- 3.4 Floodwater resource management and utilisation
- 3.5 Monitoring and early warning of water-related disasters
- 3.6 Improving resilience of water infrastructure projects for extreme events
- 3.7 Management of water risks induced by extreme weather and climate events

### **4. Supporting Aquatic Ecosystem Health and Functions**

- 4.1 The ecological health of rivers and lakes
- 4.2 Maintenance and restoration of the river basin eco-hydrological process
- 4.3 Protection and management of major rivers and lakes, from headwaters to estuaries
- 4.4 Ecological restoration of degraded rivers and lakes
- 4.5 Value of aquatic ecological products/goods and services
- 4.6 Aquatic biodiversity protection
- 4.7 Groundwater and ecosystem
- 4.8 Water quality improvement

### **5. Establishing Sustainable Water Infrastructures**

- 5.1 Exploitation and development of Nature-based Solutions in water engineering and technology
- 5.2 Large inter-basin water diversion projects
- 5.3 Digital twin river basins and digital twin projects
- 5.4 Intelligent business application system for water regulation and management
- 5.5 Joint operation and regulation of water projects
- 5.6 Multi-functional utilisation of water projects, including hydropower stations

### **6. Innovation for Water Governance and Management**

- 6.1 Water rights and water markets
- 6.2 Innovation of investment and financing mechanism, including green finance
- 6.3 Adaptive water management
- 6.4 Integrated River basin management
- 6.5 Information transparency and public participation
- 6.6 Role of Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) initiatives and reporting
- 6.7 Role of national and international law
- 6.8 Creative technology and tools for water resources management
- 6.9 Water footprint analysis and its application in regional land use planning

## CONGRESS ORGANISING COMMITTEE

### HONORARY CHAIR

Li Guoying, Minister of Water Resources of the People's Republic of China

### CHAIR

Wei Shanzhong, Vice Minister of Water Resources of the People's Republic of China

### VICE CHAIRS

Yang Derui, Director General of Water Resources Management Department, MWR, China

Xu Wenhai, Director General of National Office of Water Conservation, MWR, China

Gao Minfeng, Counsel of Planning and Programming Department, MWR, China; Vice President of the China National Committee of IWRA

Shen Fengsheng, President of the General Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Planning and Design, MWR, China

Li Ge, Deputy Director General of International Cooperation, Science and Technology Department, MWR, China

### MEMBERS

Chen Shengshui, President of Nanjing Hydraulic Research Institute

Du Bingzhao, Deputy Director General of Water Resources Management Department, MWR, China; Vice President of the China National Committee of IWRA

Gabriel Eckstein, Past president of IWRA; Professor of Law at Texas A&M University

Loïc Fauchon, President of World Water Council

Jing Maotao, Deputy Counsel of River and Lake Management Department, MWR, China

Sasha Koo-Oshima, Deputy Director of Land and Water Division, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

Kuang Shangfu, President of China Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Research

Li Xiaojing, Deputy Director General of Policy, Law and Regulation Department, MWR, China

Li Xiaolin, Deputy Director General of General Office, MWR, China

Li Xingxue, Deputy Director General of Hydrology Department, MWR, China

Li Yuanyuan, Vice President of the General Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Planning and Design, MWR, China; President of IWRA; President of the China National Committee of IWRA

Oriana Romano, Head of Unit, Water Governance and Circular Economy in Cities, Urban Policies, and Sustainable Development Division, OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities

András Szöllösi-Nagy, Professor of the National University of Public Service, Budapest, Hungary

Wang Zhangli, Deputy Director General of Flood and Drought Disaster Prevention Department, MWR, China

Xu Dezhi, Deputy Director General of Rural Water and Hydropower Department, MWR, China

Yuan Qitian, Counsel of South-to-North Water Diversion Project Management Department, MWR, China

Zhang Yunchang, Counsel of Three Gorges Project Management Department, MWR, China

Fan Zhang, Lead Economist and Global Lead for Water Economics and Climate Change, World Bank

## NATIONAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE

### CHAIR

Yang Derui, Director General of Water Resources Management Department, MWR, China

### VICE CHAIRS

Shen Fengsheng, President of the General Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Planning and Design, MWR, China

Li Xiaolin, Deputy Director General of General Office, MWR, China

Du Bingzhao, Deputy Director General of Water Resources Management Department, MWR, China; Vice President of the China National Committee of IWRA

Yan Yong, Deputy Counsel of National Office of Water Conservation, MWR, China; Vice President of the China National Committee of IWRA

Li Ge, Deputy Director General of International Cooperation, Science and Technology Department, MWR, China

Li Yuanyuan, Vice President of the General Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Planning and Design, MWR, China; President of IWRA; President of the China National Committee of IWRA

## THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

### HONORARY CHAIRS

Patrick Lavarde, Co-chair of the International Steering Committee of 9th World Water Forum; Past President of IWRA

Zhang Jianyun, Professor at Nanjing Hydraulic Research Institute; Academician of Chinese Academy of Engineering

### CO-CHAIRS

Renée Martin-Nagle, Treasurer of IWRA; President of A Ripple Effect; Special Counsel of Eckert Seamans; Visiting Scholar of Environmental Law Institute

Shi Qiuchi, Bureau Member of World Water Council (2019-2022); Chair of Water Security Task Force of World Water Council (2019-2022); Former Director of International Centre for Economic and Technical Cooperation and Exchange, MWR, China

### VICE CHAIRS

Rabi H. Mohtar, Professor of Texas A&M University; Fellow of American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers; Adjunct Professor of American University of Beirut and Purdue University; Senior International non-resident Fellow of OCP, Morocco; Governor of World Water Council; Vice President of IWRA

Wang Jianhua, Vice President of China Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Research; Vice President of the China National Committee of IWRA

Cecilia Tortajada, Professor in Practice of Environmental Innovation, University of Glasgow; Past President of IWRA

Wang Zhongjing, Professor at Tsinghua University; Vice President of Ningxia University; Vice President of the China National Committee of IWRA

Huang Yan, Vice Chief Engineer of Changjiang Water Resources Commission

Yoonjin Kim, Asia Pacific Regional Manager of the World Water Council

Guillermo Donoso, Professor at the Water Law and Economics Center of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile

Jia Shaofeng, Professor at the Institute of Geographic Science and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences; Vice President of the China National Committee of IWRA; IWRA Fellow Member

## THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

### MEMBERS

**Jie Hou**, Professor Level Senior Engineer, General Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Planning and Design, Ministry of Water Resources, China

**Julie Clark-Brown**, PhD Researcher, University of Strathclyde, Scotland

**Rasha Hassan**, PhD Candidate in Geography, Territorial Planning and Environmental Management, Faculty of Geography and History, University of Barcelona, Spain

**Rosario Sanchez**, Senior Research Scientist, Texas Water Resources Institute at Texas A&M University

**Xiaojun Geng**, Senior Engineer, General Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Planning and Design, Ministry of Water Resources, China

**Ying Tian**, Professor Level Senior Engineer, General Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Planning and Design, Ministry of Water Resources, China

**Zhongnan Zhao**, Professor Level Senior Engineer, General Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Planning and Design, Ministry of Water Resources, China

**Lili Yu**, Professor Level Senior Engineer, General Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Planning and Design, Ministry of Water Resources, China

**Aurélien Dumont**, UNESCO, Groundwater Sustainability and Water Cooperation Section, Paris

**Nidhi Nagabhatla**, Senior Fellow, UNU CRIS Cluster Coordinator –Nature, Climate, and Health

**Jianhua Li**, Professor, Tongji University

**Qiting Zuo**, Professor, Zhengzhou University

**Conglin Zhang**, Associate Professor, Institutes of Science and Development, Chinese Academy of Sciences

**Jianhua Wang**, Vice President of China Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Research (IWHR)

**Ali Fares**, Endowed Professor, College of Agriculture and Human Science, Prairie View A&M University, Texas USA

**Chrysi Laspidou**, Professor, Civil Engineering Department, University of Thessaly, Greece

**Dongya Sun**, Chief Engineer, Senior Engineer, Department of Water Hazard Research, China Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Research, Ministry of Water Resources, China

**Virender K. Sharma**, Director, program for the Environment and Sustainability, School of Public Health, Texas A&M University

**Yangwen Jia**, Department of Water Resources, China Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Research, Beijing 100038, China

**Zhongjing Wang**, Professor of Tsinghua University; Vice President of Ningxia University

**Adriana Zuniga-Teran**, Assistant Professor, School of Geography, Development & Environment and Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy, University of Arizona

**Di Long**, Department of Hydraulic Engineering, Tsinghua University

**Elcin Kentel**, Department of Civil Engineering, Middle East Technical University, Ankara Turkey

**Felipe Vásquez-Lavín**, School of Business and Economics, Universidad del Desarrollo, Chile

**Lei Zhu**, College of Civil and Hydraulic Engineering, Ningxia University, China

**Litang Hu**, College of Water Sciences, Beijing Normal University

**Malcolm J. Gander**, Consulting Earth Scientist and Remedial Project Manager, US Department of Defense

**Navarun Varma**, Lecturer, Residential College4, National University of Singapore

**Ojasvee Arora**, Institute of Water Policy, National University of Singapore. Singapore.

**Raya Stephan**, Water law expert, Consultant; Deputy Editor in Chief, Water International, IWRA

**Yu Wang**, Associate Professor, Center for Social Sciences, Southern University of Science and Technology, China

**Stefanos Xenarios**, Graduate School of Public Policy, Nazarbayev University, Kazakhstan

**Mengzhen Xu**, Department of Hydrolic Engineering, Tsinghua University, China

**Yu Fang**, China Agricultural University

**Yuanyuan Zha**, Wuhan University

**Yan Huang**, Vice Chief Engineer, Changjiang Water Resources Commission of MWR.

**Yoonjin Kim**, Asia Pacific Regional Manager of the World Water Council

**Alberto Garrido**, Professor, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid

**Guohe Huang**, Professor, University of Regina, Canada

**Hassan Tolba Aboelnga**, Research and Executive Manager of Arab Network for Sustainable Development at League of Arab States

**Qingyi Hu**, Senior Engineer, Changjiang Institute of Survey, Planning, Design and Research Corporation, Changjiang Water Resources Commission, China

**Seungho Lee**, Professor, Graduate School of International Studies, Korea University

**Yonghui Zhu**, Changjiang River Scientific Research Institute, Changjiang Water Resources Commission, Ministry of Water Resources, China

**Guillermo Donoso**, Full Professor at the Water Law and Economics Center of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (PUC).

**Shaofeng Jia**, Professor, Institute of Geographic Science and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences; IWRA fellow member

**James E. Nickum**, International Water Resources Association (IWRA)

**QiuHong Tang**, Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences

**Dajun Shen**, Professor, School of Environment and Natural Resources, Renmin University of China

**Dinara Ziganshina**, Director, Scientific Information Center of Interstate Commission for Water Coordination in Central Asia, Uzbekistan

**M. Dinesh Kumar**, Executive Director, Institute for Resource Analysis and Policy, Hyderabad, Telangana State, India



### CONGRESS SECRETARIAT (CS)

The General Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Planning and Design, MWR, in China, set up the Congress Secretariat, which consisted of six working groups: Coordinative Group, Technical Group, International Cooperative Group, Media-support Group, Budget and Finance Group, and the Logistics Group.

### XIX WORLD WATER CONGRESSES AND FUTURE CONGRESSES

At the end of 2021, the call for interest in hosting the XIX World Water Congress was launched. Initial applications consisting of a two-page letter were required by the end of March 2022. This was followed by an invitation for full applications by the middle of 2022. A preferred candidate was selected at the beginning of 2023, and following negotiations, the winner was announced at the XVIII World Water Congress in September 2023. As announced in Beijing, the XIX World Water Congress is set to be hosted in 2025 in Durban, South Africa.

**The next call for interest to host the XX (20th) World Water Congress (2027) will be launched in 2024.**

### WORLD WATER ENVOYS PROGRAMME

At the end of 2022, IWRA launched its second call for applications for its World Water Envoys programme, attracting 115 applicants from around the world. Following a rigorous selection process, four outstanding individuals were selected as our 2023 "World Water Envoys": Kate Hawley from the UK, Son Tra Nguyen from Vietnam,



Oudi Kgomongwe from South Africa, and Moemen Sobh from Egypt. Each envoy was paired with a mentor from IWRA's Executive Board, who offered guidance and support to the envoys throughout their preparation and presentations at the XVIII World Water Congress in Beijing.



**The mentor-mentee pairings were as follows:**

- Kate Hawley & Tom Williams
- Son Tra Nguyen & Eric Tardieu
- Oudi Kgomongwe & Henning Bjornlund
- Moemen Sobh & Dahlia Sabri



During the congress, the envoys participated in various special sessions, including an IWRA-organised event titled, "From Land to Sea: Engaging in Solutions with the World Water Envoys." Moderated by IWRA's Executive Director, Callum Clench, and Project Officer, Dr. Mary Trudeau, the session provided a platform for the envoys to present their projects.

Kate Hawley delved into "Strategic Woodland Creation for Flood Management," emphasising the role of forestry in flood mitigation, including the innovative idea of reintroducing beavers. Son Tra Nguyen addressed "Water Issues & Climate Change Adaptation in the Mekong Delta," underscoring collaborative solutions for sustainability in the region. Oudi Kgomongwe focused on "Sustainable Groundwater Development & Management," stressing the importance of considering social, economic, and environmental factors in managing groundwater, along with advocating for community-led initiatives. Finally, Moemen Sobh highlighted the issue of water scarcity in Port Said, Egypt, stressing the urgency of addressing freshwater resource challenges to population growth and inadequate water infrastructure.

The envoys delivered closing remarks during the ceremony, summarising what they've learned and how they networked throughout the week, showing the impact addressing water challenges can have in their respective communities.

The World Water Envoys Programme, an award-winning initiative, is an integral part of the World Water Congress. Established with the crucial mission of amplifying voices of the youth at international events, these passionate leaders contribute insights regarding water challenges faced by their communities and the innovative solutions they are developing. IWRA plans to continue this impactful programme, launching the third call for applications in 2024 and reinforcing its commitment to youth engagement in water resource management.

**To learn more about the programme, click here: [www.iwra.org/world-water-envoys-programme](http://www.iwra.org/world-water-envoys-programme)**

# ISLAND WATER CONGRESS

Hosted by the Faroese Geological Survey (Jarðfeingi)

“FRESHWATER AND ISLANDS: ADMINISTRATION, COLLABORATION AND INNOVATION”

4 - 6 September 2024, Tórshavn, Faroe Islands







In partnership with the Faroese Geological Survey (Jarðfeingi), IWRA will host a high-level congress on Freshwater and Islands in the Faroe Islands from 4-6 September 2024. The congress aims to address water challenges faced by island communities and offering tools for specific issues. The event will cater to a global island audience as well as small island developing states (SIDS). It aims to transcend the boundaries of a conventional academic gathering, incorporating a policy-oriented approach that will captivate water professionals working in islands, including the younger island generations. Additionally, the congress will celebrate the significance of freshwater within the island context, embracing the realms of arts, culture, and youth engagement.

Building on the legacy of the World Water Congresses, IWRA introduced the Islands Water Congress series in 2023, to focus on the unique challenges faced by islands, globally. These events, happening every two years on different islands, address island-specific considerations needed for water resource management, and aim to develop a body of scholarship that will boost freshwater opportunities and advance solutions for addressing freshwater challenges. The Islands Water Congress benefits from IWRA's expertise while also working to emphasise the unique challenges and opportunities these islands present.

### THREE THEMES WILL BE ADDRESSED AT THE 1<sup>ST</sup> ISLANDS WATER CONGRESS:

#### 1. Administration of Freshwater on Islands

- (1a) Concept of freshwater administration on islands
- (1b) The role of regulation in the administration of freshwater on islands

#### 2. Collaboration in the Administration of Freshwater on Islands

- (2a) Different actors who partake in the administration of freshwater on islands
- (2b) Need for such actors to collaborate in the administration of freshwater on islands

#### 3. Innovation in the Administration of Freshwater on Islands

- (3a) Innovation that improves freshwater administration processes (hard and soft innovation)
- (3b) Innovation that better captures the value of freshwater on islands

### THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

#### CO-CHAIRS

**Francesco Sindico**, Professor at the University of Strathclyde Law School in Glasgow, co-chair of the IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law Climate Change Law Specialist Group and a Director of the Climate Change Litigation Initiative (C2LI)

**Óluva Reginsdóttir Eidesgaard**, Research geologist at the Faroese Geological Survey in Tórshavn, the Faroe Islands, and Project Lead of the Investigation of Groundwater Potential in the Faroe Islands.

#### ISC MEMBERS

**Gabriel Eckstein**, Professor of Law at Texas A&M University, Chair of the Executive Council of the International Association for Water Law, Immediate Past President of the International Water Resources Association, and Associate Editor for the book series Brill Research Perspectives: International Water Law

**Jana Ólavsdóttir**, Research geologist at the Faroese Geological Survey (Jarðfeingi), project lead for groundwater and geothermal energy related to research, administration, and legislation, and member of the Programme Committee for Research and the Aid Scheme for the Labour Market Campaign at the Research Council Faroe Islands

**Firouz Gaini**, Professor in anthropology at the University of the Faroe Islands, and Co-editor of Island Studies Journal and BARN (Nordic Childhood Journal)

**Jill Robbie**, Senior Lecturer in Law at the University of Glasgow

**Kate Brown**, Lead, Global Island Partnership

**Laurie Brinklow**, Assistant Professor and Co-ordinator of the Master of Arts in Island Studies programme, and Chair of the Institute of Island Studies at the University of Prince Edward Island in Charlottetown, Canada.

**Ronald Roopnarine**, Lecturer in the Faculty of Food and Agriculture, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus (FFA, UWI), and Network Manager of Caribbean WaterNet, (Caribbean arm of CapNet UNDP)

**Milika Nagasima Sobey**, Technical Adviser-Coastal Ecosystems for GIZ Pacific

**Steinunn Hauksdóttir**, Director of Mapping and Exploration at ÍSOR, Iceland Geosurvey

**Manuel Sapiano**, Chief Executive Officer of the Energy and Water Agency (EWA) within Malta's Ministry for the Environment, Energy and Enterprise.

**Gunnhild Storbekkrønning Solli**, Associated Professor of Law at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU), and member of the Norwegian Regional Committees for Medical and Health Research Ethics and serves as the chair of the board of the Norwegian Environmental Law Association.

**Kim Steve Gerlach Bergkvist**, Chemical Department Manager at the Faroese Food- and Veterinary Agency

Visit [islandswatercongress.org](https://islandswatercongress.org) to learn more

# ONLINE CONFERENCES

## 2023 ONLINE CONFERENCE

***"EMERGING POLLUTANTS: PROTECTING WATER QUALITY FOR THE HEALTH OF PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT"***



From 17 January – 19 January 2023, in partnership with UNESCO Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (UNESCO-IHP), IWRA successfully held its third Online Conference, themed, “Emerging Pollutants: Protecting Water Quality for the Health of People and the Environment”. This online conference highlighted the ways the world can advance knowledge, research, and build solutions for managing emerging pollutants, improving, and protecting water quality in a changing world. With special thanks to UNESCO’s support, participants from all geographic regions, including low-income countries, could register and attend the conference free of charge.

### **THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE ARE TO:**

- Explore the impacts of emerging pollutants on water resources, considering technical and policy solutions to mitigate and reduce human health and ecological risks and bearing in mind increasing demand on water resources, as well as impacts of global climatic and demographic changes.
- Identify the appropriate water policies and technologies needed to motivate change in water management and

- business, as well as for addressing emerging pollutants.
- Highlight the bold policy and institutional changes needed to support the transformation in water management and policy and across other sectors, ensuring better and more reliable water quality and protecting human health and ecosystems.
- Showcase successful efforts of innovative, nature-positive, and technological solutions for improved water quality and reduced water pollution.
- Examine the life cycle management of emerging pollutants to find solutions based on a circular economy approach (and not only at end-of-pipe).
- Discuss how best to work with industries, regulators, and local communities, engaging all relevant stakeholders (including under-represented groups).

**Recordings, conference reports, and other proceedings (including presentations and posters) are available online at:**

**[www.iwraonlineconference.org](http://www.iwraonlineconference.org)**

THE CONFERENCE CONSISTED OF FIVE MAIN SUB-THEMES ADDRESSED BY SPEAKERS IN BOTH REGULAR AND HIGH-LEVEL SESSIONS. THESE THEMES WERE:

**THEME 1:  
EMERGING POLLUTANTS IN AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS**

- Identifying and assessing ecological risks
- Science informing policy / policy informing science
- Institutional, policy, and regulatory challenges and approaches.
- Technological versus nature-based versus regulatory solutions
- Success stories and case studies

**THEME 2:  
EMERGING POLLUTANTS AND GROUNDWATER**

- Identifying and assessing human health and ecological risks
- Science informing policy / policy informing science
- Institutional, policy and regulatory challenges and approaches
- Success stories and case studies

**THEME 3:  
EMERGING POLLUTANTS AND WASTEWATER**

- Identifying and assessing human health and ecological risks
- Science informing policy / policy informing science
- Wastewater and the circular economy
- Institutional, policy, and regulatory challenges and approaches
- Innovative infrastructure to reduce risk of trace contaminant release
- The roles, responsibilities, and contributions of the private sector
- Success stories and case studies

**THEME 4:  
A CIRCULAR ECONOMY APPROACH: LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT OF EMERGING POLLUTANTS**

- Science informing policy / policy informing science
- Institutional, policy, and regulatory challenges and approaches
- The roles, responsibilities, and contributions of the private sector
- Success stories and case studies

**THEME 5:  
"PRIORITY" EMERGING POLLUTANTS IN THE HYDROCYCLE: MICROPLASTICS, NANOMATERIAL, PFAS AND PPCPS**

- Science informing policy / policy informing science
- Institutional, policy and regulatory challenges and approaches
- Identifying and assessing human health and ecological risks
- The roles, responsibilities, and contributions of the private sector
- When is the hazard/risk too high?

**ONLINE CONFERENCE STATISTICS**

Over **2,700** REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS from more than **110** COUNTRIES  
More than **90** SPEAKERS AND MODERATORS  
A total of **14** DISTINCT SESSIONS held over **2,5** DAYS, including:

- 11 Regular Sessions
- 5 Thematic Sessions
- 70 Oral Presentations
- 2 High-Level Panels
- 50+ Poster presentations

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**Sarantuyaa Zandaryaa**, Programme Specialist, Division of Water Sciences, Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP), UNESCO

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**Malcolm Gander**, Environmental Manager, United States Department of Defense

**Piero Gardinali**, Professor, Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry at Florida International University

**Rasha Hassan**, PhD Candidate, University of Barcelona; Project Officer at H2O People

**Nonhlanhla Kalebaila**, Research Manager, South Africa Water Research Commission

**Robert Kalin**, Professor, Strathclyde University, Glasgow Scotland

**Marjin Korndewal**, Policy Analyst, Organisation for Economic Co-operation, and Development (OECD)

**Cassiana C. Montagner**, The State University of Campinas – UNICAMP

**Dahlia Sabri**, Board Director, IWRA

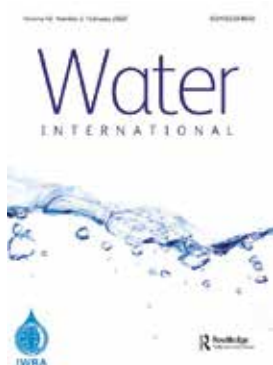
**Mary Trudeau**, Director, Envirings Inc.

**Xinghui Xia**, Professor, School of Environment, Beijing Normal University

# PUBLICATIONS



## WATER INTERNATIONAL



IWRA's flagship publication since 1975, *Water International*, remains in the expert hands of Editor-in-Chief, James E. Nickum (since 2007) and Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Raya Marina Stephan (since 2018). It is also supported by 5 Associate Editors and a strong Editorial Board.

In 2023, the journal published two special issues. The first was on Intelligent River Basins in China: A SMART Water Revolution (48.3). The second is expected to be on Irrigated Urban Agriculture (tentative title) (48.8).

**2022 IMPACT FACTOR: 2.6 (Q2),  
CITESCORE 4.3 (Q2)**

### MOST READ 2023

Patience Mukuyu et al. (Volume 48, 2023 - Issue 8) *Do needs motivate the exchange of data in transboundary waters? Insights from Africa's shared basins.*

### THE EDITORIAL TEAM

#### EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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#### DEPUTY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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Chad Staddon, University of the West of England, UK

Cecilia Tortajada, University of Glasgow, UK, and Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, Singapore

## IWRA Mentorship Publishing Scheme for Early-Career Professionals

Initially led by Robert G. Varady, IWRA launched an innovative programme in 2020 aimed at supporting early-career scholars and water professionals through the publication of special articles for *Water International* that promote interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary works and that are coauthored or supervised by senior water professionals. These articles are published regularly in a special section of *Water International*. The second call for applications for the programme, which is led by David Molden, launched in 2023.



### THE EDITORIAL BOARD

Nani G. Bhowmik, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA

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Mingna Wang, Tianjin University, China

Philippus Wester, PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, the Netherlands

Kevin Wheeler, Oxford University, UK



## IWRA POLICY BRIEFS

IWRA publishes two series of policy briefs, our “blue series” (which are based on special issues of *Water International*) and our “green series” (IWRA Policy Briefs that are typically published in association with key partners, task forces, or in the framework of IWRA events and activities). In 2023, two Blue Series and five Green Series policy briefs were produced.

### “Blue Series” Policy Briefs:

- Water International Policy Brief N°21 - Public Banks and Public Water in Europe
- Water International Policy Brief N°22 - Measuring the Impacts of Water Governance

### “Green Series” Policy Briefs:

- IWRA Policy Brief N°24 – Emerging Pollutants: A Growing Threat to Aquatic Ecosystems
- IWRA Policy Brief N°25 – Emerging pollutants and groundwater
- IWRA Policy Brief N°26 – Emerging pollutants and managing wastewater and waste
- IWRA Policy Brief N°27 – A circular economy approach: Lifecycle management of emerging pollutants
- IWRA Policy Brief N°28 – Priority emerging pollutants: microplastics, nanomaterial, and trace chemicals

James E. Nickum is Coordinator of the Policy Briefs. He works with a team of Policy Briefs Editors, led by Kara DiFrancesco, Regina M. Buono, and Kris Hartley, with support also from Mary Trudeau.

## SPECIAL ISSUE BOOKS

*Water International* special issues and thematically related articles form the basis of a subsequent publication as a book in the Routledge Special Issues on Water Policy and Governance book series. James E. Nickum and Cecilia Tortajada are co-editors of this series.

### The following seven were published in 2023:

- *Groundwater: Recent Advances in Interdisciplinary Knowledge*, ed. by Raya Marina Stephan, James E. Nickum, and Philippus Wester
- *Public Banks, Public Water: Exploring the Links in Europe*,

ed. by Thomas Marois and David A. McDonald

- *Sustainable Groundwater Development for Improved Livelihoods in Sub-Saharan Africa*, ed. by Paul Pavelic, Karen G. Villholth and Shilp Verma
- *Smart Water Management: Truly Intelligent or Just Another Pretty Name?*, ed. by Henning Bjornlund, Stephanie Kuisma, James E. Nickum, and Raya Marinaq Stephan
- *Putting Water Security to Work: Addressing Global Sustainable Development Challenges*, ed. by Chad Staddon and Christopher A. Scott
- *Flood Resilience of Private Properties*, ed. by Thomas Hartmann, Willemijn van Doorn-Hoekveld, Helena F.M.W. van Rijswick and Tejo Spit
- *A River Runs Through It: A Comparative Study of Transboundary Water Disputes and Cooperation in Asia*, ed. by Selina Ho.

## IWRA'S NEWSLETTERS: IWRA UPDATE

The Association's quarterly newsletter, the IWRA Update, published its regular four editions in 2023. The newsletter aims to inform IWRA members and key partners about past and upcoming Association activities, share recent news, and provide news about IWRA members and partners. These newsletters are accessible by IWRA members, partners, and the public, and are published exclusively online. Distribution occurs via email (Mailchimp) and editions are promoted on social media channels, including X (formerly known as Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Each issue featured open calls, inviting members to contribute updates on the latest activities and research. This year, the communications team made additional efforts to enhance the newsletter appearance by ensuring it is more concise and user-friendly.

**IWRA Members, partners, and the wider public can access these newsletters here:**

[www.iwra.org/newsletter](http://www.iwra.org/newsletter)

# CAPACITY BUILDING

## IWRA WEBINARS

In 2023, IWRA held online webinars on eight different water-related topics. They also hosted special UN Water (United Nations Water) campaigns.

- **Webinar n°58: Water in the International Court of Justice: Recent Developments** (8 March 2023)
- **Webinar n°59: World Water Day: Water for People and Cooperation Partnership** (20 March 2023)
- **Webinar n°60: Smart One Water: Lessons on Smart Water Management from IWRA Task Force Members** (29 March 2023)
- **Webinar n°61: The Human Right to Water and its Implications on the Law of Transboundary Aquifers** (29 April 2023)
- **Webinar n°62: Water and Climate Change: A Holistic Approach** (6 June 2023)
- **Webinar n°63: Global Youth Action for Water** (11 July 2023)
- **Webinar n°64: Road to Beijing: Pathways for Youth at the World Water Congress** (22 August 2023)
- **Webinar n°65: World Toilet Day 2023 - Acceleration Change in Global Sanitation** (21 November 2023)

More than 1,000 registrants participated in these webinars. All webinars were free, recorded, and are available on IWRA's website and YouTube channel.

**[Access our recordings and presentations here: www.iwra.org/webinars](http://www.iwra.org/webinars)**

## IWRA MASTER CLASSES

In 2023, and in collaboration with Human Right 2 Water (HR2W) and South Africa's Water Research Commission (WRC), IWRA hosted a successful and virtual masterclass series focused on building Institutional Responsibility in support of SDG 6 and the rights to water and sanitation. The series aimed to educate authorities and businesses on innovating solutions, human rights-

based approaches, and methods for fostering sustainable water management. The modules of the masterclass series covered various aspects, including investment in the rights-based approach, corporate due diligence for sustainability, stakeholder engagement, and human rights indicators for SDG 6 realisation. It featured public lectures, skill-building workshops, and in-depth discussions facilitated by registered participants, IWRA members, and masterclass leaders.

The practical approach to these topics provided participants with valuable insights for addressing water challenges while also presenting considerations for protecting human rights and promoting sustainable development. 724 registrants attended the sessions, and 34 participants attended the workshops.

- **Master Class 1: Investment in the rights-based approach for sustainable water solutions. Led by Samkelisiwe Hlophe-Ginindza, Luxon Nhamo, and Yuri Ramkissoo** (3 May 2023)
- **Master Class 2: The human rights to water and sanitation, and corporate due diligence for sustainability. Led by Pedi Obani** (10 May 2023)
- **Master Class 3: Situation analysis from a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA). Led by Raya Marina-Stephan** (17 May 2023)
- **Master Class 4: Stakeholder engagement and going beyond Corporate Social Responsibility. Led by Michelle Hiestermann and Yuri Ramkissoo** (24 May 2023)
- **Master Class 5: Human Rights Indicators as a tool for realising SDG 6. Led by Pedi Obani** (31 May 2023)

**To learn more about this series of Master Classes, visit: [www.iwra.org/master-classes-2023](http://www.iwra.org/master-classes-2023)**

Due to the ongoing successes of these masterclass series, IWRA will continue to host master classes with the assistance of IWRA Task Forces and Chapters, as well as with our various water organisational partners. During 2023, IWRA's Executive Office continued to build partnerships with the third series in mind.

**To learn more about the most recent Master Classes, visit: [www.iwra.org/master-classes](http://www.iwra.org/master-classes)**

# IWRA AWARDS 2023



Since its creation, IWRA strives to recognise the contributions made towards water management by excellent water researchers, professionals, and organisations. IWRA presents 5 main awards to those individuals nominated at the end of 2022 and into early 2023. This year's award winners were announced and presented at the XVIII World Water Congress in Beijing, China.

## THE CRYSTAL DROP AWARD

The Crystal Drop Award is awarded once every two years to individuals or organisations in recognition of their laudable contributions to the improvement of the world's water situation. The 2023 Crystal Drop Awardees were:

- **Olcay Ünver**, a Senior Specialist at the Wrigley Global Futures Laboratory, and a Professor at the Melikian Centre at Arizona State University.
- **Korea Water Resources Corporation (K-water)**, a prominent South Korean company, specialising in water resources management and infrastructure services.

Established in 1967, K-Water has played a pivotal role in promoting the sustainable development and conservation of water resources in South Korea. Yun Seog Dae, the CEO of K-water, accepted the Crystal Drop Award on behalf of K-water.

## THE VEN TE CHOW MEMORIAL AWARD AND LECTURE

The Ven Te Chow Memorial Lecture Award was established to honour IWRA's first president, Professor Ven Te Chow. It recognises an outstanding lecture and enables the speaker to deliver the lecture at the IWRA World Water Congress.

In 2023, this award was granted to Professor Jun Xia, a former IWRA President and trailblazer in water management, sustainable development, and practical applications. His pioneering work has not only impacted China but has also reverberated globally.



In 2022, IWRA opened its call for Honorary and Member nominations. The following winners were announced in 2023, and recognised at the XVIII World Water Congress in Beijing, China:

#### Honorary Membership Award Winners:

**David Molden**, Former Director General International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)

**David L Feldman**, Professor of Urban Planning and Public Policy, School of Social Ecology, University of California, Irvine. Courtesy appointment Department of Political Science and Director of the Master's programme for Public Policy. Director of Water UCI.

**Aziza Akhmouch**, Head of the Cities, Urban Policies and Sustainable Development division within the Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions, and Cities of the OECD.

**David K. Kreamer**, Professor of Hydrology, University of Nevada Department of Geosciences; President, International Association of Hydrogeologists.

#### FELLOWSHIP AWARD WINNER

**Giuseppe Rossi**, Emeritus Professor of Hydrology and Water Resources, University of Catania (Italy)

#### WATER INTERNATIONAL BEST PAPER AWARD

This award is given to author(s) of an article appearing in Water International that displays great originality, innovation, technical quality, and contribution to water resources management. In 2023, IWRA recognised the best paper published in the 2021 and 2022 issues. The winners are:

- Laura Turley et al., (2022). Institutions for reoperating reservoirs in semi- arid regions facing climate change and competing societal water demands: insights from Colorado.
- Jorge Garcia-Arias et al., (2022) Public water without (public) financial mediation? Remunicipalising water in Valladolid, Spain.

**For more information about IWRA Awards, please visit: [www.iwra.org/awards](http://www.iwra.org/awards)**

## WATER DROP AWARD

Established in 2020, the Water Drop Award nominates and recognises a student or early career professional, typically under the age of 35, who has made an innovative contribution to the water sector.

In 2023, IWRA proudly presented the Water Drop Award to Lindsey Blodgett. Lindsey is the Chief Advisor at NextWave Consulting LLC. and is a dedicated member of the IWRA Task Force and Chapters Committee. She is also one of the esteemed "Water and Climate Alliance Leaders," appointed by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) to advance Sustainable Development Goal 6 on a global scale.

## OTHER IWRA AWARDS

### HONORARY AND FELLOW MEMBERS

Annually, IWRA nominates individuals as recipients for the Honorary and Fellow membership awards. An Honorary Membership is the highest honour granted by the Association. It is awarded to individuals who have made significant contributions to the field of water resources or have achieved acknowledged eminence in a specific area of water resources. Once elected as an Honorary Member, the individual is exempt from paying membership fees and holds the honorary designation indefinitely.

A Fellow Membership is awarded to individuals who have been IWRA members for a minimum of ten years and have made substantial contributions to both the Association and the field of water resources. Upon election as a Fellow Member, the individual will be required to pay for the Silver membership but will be automatically upgraded to the Gold membership of IWRA.



# STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS, COLLABORATIONS AND EXTERNAL EVENTS



Throughout 2023 IWRA continued to grow and increase its work with various partners and organisations. IWRA's growth and increase in activities were attributed to the collaboration with key water partners, such as the Asia Water Council, Human Right2Water, Korea Water Forum, K-water, OECD, SIWI, UNESCO-IHP, UNESCO i-WSSM, UN-Water, and the World Water Council – to name a few – and the development of new events. In 2023, IWRA attended various international events, promoting the work of its members, and establishing new opportunities for collaboration. More on these partnerships and events in what follows:

used in urban development. The project aimed to identify and examine technological solutions for water resources management, assess global standards and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for smart water solutions, and develop a new certification scheme for Smart Water Cities that could be recognised internationally. The Asia Water Council invited cities interested in evaluating and improving their water services and urban water resources management to participate in the project as pilot cities. Tests of these pilot cities aimed to evaluate the adequacy and feasibility of developed KPIs through data collection and analysis. They also sought to identify areas for improvement and strategies for supporting local authorities in utilising the Smart Water City Index. Visit the K-water section of this report for more on this project.



## ASIA WATER COUNCIL (AWC)

In 2023, IWRA was re-elected to the Asia Water Council's Board of Governors in July, allowing us to strengthen our presence and partnerships in Asia, and emphasising our commitment to advancing water resource management in the region.

Our most significant activity with the Asia Water Council in 2023 was through the Smart Water Cities Project. This initiative, run collaboratively with the Asia Water Council and with Korea Water Resources Corporation (K-water), focused on the analysis of smart water technologies



## HUMAN RIGHT 2 WATER

IWRA maintains a close working relationship with the Human Right 2 Water (HR2W), with IWRA Executive Director serving on the Board of HR2W as Secretary.

In 2023, IWRA collaborated with the Human Right 2 Water (HR2W) and South Africa's Water Research Commission (WRC) to develop a Masterclass series and webinar. The five-module series masterclass focused on the right to water and sanitation and the Institutional Responsibility in supporting SDG. Supported by a human rights-

based approach, it was designed to introduce steps that authorities and businesses can take to enhance access to water and sanitation, improve community relationships, and support sustainable development goals. More information about the masterclass series can be found here: [www.iwra.org/master-classes-2023](http://www.iwra.org/master-classes-2023).

The webinar, hosted by IWRA, discussed the Human Right to Water and its implications on the law of transboundary aquifers. The webinar aimed to highlight the significance of groundwater and the need for legal frameworks to ensure the human right to water is upheld. The webinar report and recording can be accessed at [www.iwra.org/iwra-webinar-61](http://www.iwra.org/iwra-webinar-61).



### KOREA INTERNATIONAL WATER WEEK (KIWW) 2023

IWRA's Executive Director, Callum Clench, participated in the annual Korea International Water Week (KIWW), serving on the Jury for the World Water Challenge, as well as representing IWRA at the Water Leaders' Round Table, and at the World Water Partnership meeting. The World Water Challenge is an annual international contest devoted to addressing critical global water issues and developing solutions. The Water Leaders' Round Table (WLRT) is a key programme of KIWW. It gathers high-level representatives to share best practices and experiences, globally, contributing to the theme 'Sustainable Water Management for Human and Nature.' The 'Water Leaders' Action Declaration' is a significant outcome. The World Water Partnership meeting unites high-level representatives from past and future World Water Forum host countries, fostering knowledge-sharing and planning for the 10th World Water Forum. Discussions emphasised creating stronger connections and legacies between fora, with a focus on transboundary water management in the Asia Pacific.



### K-WATER

Since July 2020, IWRA has led the Smart Water Cities project, collaborating with the Korea Water Resources Corporation (K-water) and the Asian Water Council (AWC).

The Smart Water Cities project aims to provide a comprehensive and practical approach to the analysis of urban water services and urban water resources management. Its primary outcome is the Smart Water City Index, an instrument that includes a comprehensive set of indicators and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) used to measure and compare technical and governance aspects of urban water systems. The third and final phase of the project, conducted in 2023, involved a call for pilot cities that garnered significant interest from locations worldwide. The City of Semarang in Indonesia and Busan Eco Delta City in the Republic of Korea were selected from a pool of applicants, which included Abuja (Nigeria), Ado Ekiti (Nigeria), Amasya (Turkey), Baguio City (Philippines), Bahir Dar (Ethiopia), Dakar (Senegal), Gaziantep (Turkey), Gilgit (Pakistan), Islamabad (Pakistan), Jodhpur (India), Kampala (Uganda), Lagos (Nigeria), Leon (Mexico), Lusaka (Zambia), Mendoza (Argentina), Molde (Norway), Mombasa (Kenya), Ordu (Turkey), San Pedro (Colombia), Tabriz (Iran), Tekirdağ (Turkey), Tervuren (Belgium), and Yalova (Turkey).



Signing ceremony between IWRA, K-water, AWC, and the city of Semarang, the first pilot city selected to undergo an examination of its urban water.

The pilot city tests aimed to evaluate the adequacy and feasibility of the KPIs through data collection and analysis of two selected cases. It also sought to identify areas for improvement and strategies to support local authorities in utilising the Smart Water City Index. Based on feedback, enhancements have been made to the initial Smart Water City Index, and guidelines and instructions for local authorities have been improved. To gather the necessary information, a series of meetings and data collection activities were established with personnel in different departments and responsible authorities from both Busan Eco Delta City and Semarang from April to September. In addition, an onsite visit to Semarang was carried out from 16 to 19 October. This visit gave the opportunity to verify the information that the city authorities had provided, and to collect some of the missing data.

The Smart Water Cities project was presented at the UN Water conference in New York in 22-24 March, at a Special Session at the XVIII IWRA World Water Congress in Beijing, on 13 September, and at the Smart Cities Expo World Exhibition in Barcelona on 9 November. The final report of the project, titled "Final Report on Key Performance Indicators and Pilot City Evaluations," is underway and will be available soon for reading and download on the IWRA website.

Throughout 2023, the IWRA team conducted regular meetings with K-water counterparts and convened two Steering Committee Meetings with members from K-water, AWC and IWRA.

on IWRA's involvement with the WGI, and how we have adopted many of the outcomes into our work. IWRA also assisted in the 18th WGI meeting at the OECD in Paris (France) on 5-6 July 2023. The main objective of these meetings was to prepare WGI's contribution to the 10th World Water Forum, most notably in the form of implementing OECD Principles on Water Governance within the Forum Handbook. IWRA also worked with the OECD WGI to develop a new Policy Brief based on the 2022 special issue of Water International, "Measuring the Impacts of Water Governance".



**STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL WATER INSTITUTE (SIWI)**

IWRA was re-elected to the Steering Committee of SIWI's Source to Sea (S2S) Platform, represented by Executive Director, Callum Clench, and IWRA Board member, Ganesh Pangare. This collaboration recognises the importance links between upstream and downstream activities, maintaining a holistic view of the source-to-sea system and its benefit to the management of land, water, coastal, and marine spheres. IWRA is committed to sharing and generating knowledge on this topic, supporting activities, and encouraging impactful action through highlighting member activities.



**OECD WATER GOVERNANCE INITIATIVE (WGI)**

IWRA joined in celebrating 10 years of the OECD Water Governance Initiative (WGI) during the UN 2023 Water Conference on 23 March 23 at the Austrian Cultural Forum in New York (US), with IWRA Executive Director Callum Clench invited to join a panel to share reflections



**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, AND CULTURAL ORGANISATION (UNESCO)**

IWRA continued to join forces with UNESCO, working on various activities with their Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP), including a dedicated project with their International Centre for Water Security and Sustainable Management (i-WSSM). UNESCO aims to further implement the ninth phase of the Intergovernmental

Hydrological Programme (IHP-IX) covering 2022-2029, identifying key water priority areas to support Members States to achieve the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To that end, the UNESCO Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP) was an organising partner for IWRA's third Online Conference which took place in early 2023. It is the second time that UNESCO-IHP has helped put this IWRA event together, which was hosted entirely online. Thanks to their financial contribution, the event was free and enabled participation from experts from Africa, low-income countries, women, and youth.



## UNESCO I-WSSM

IWRA has continued its collaboration with UNESCO i-WSSM to produce the Global Water Security Issues (GWSI) series, a capacity development initiative of i-WSSM. The GWSI documents case studies of emerging global water security issues in the context of specific themes identified annually. Mary Trudeau manages this project for IWRA.

The specific objectives of the GWSI Series were to:

- share research and studies on similar topics, strengthening cooperation among researchers, policy advisors, and decision-makers engaged in the international water sector
- to encourage and enhance research on water security-related issues; and
- to identify solutions for improving global water security-related issues and to contribute towards achieving water security in the long term.

The first GWSI publication IWRA managed was the second in the GWSI series, published in 2020 under the theme, "Water Reuse within a Circular Economy Context". Issue 3 was published in 2021 under the theme, "The Role of Sound Groundwater Resources Management and Governance to Achieve Water Security". Both books are available through UNESCO's online library.

Three additional issues, numbers 4, 5 and 6, were in production during 2023, and are tentatively themed: Water Security and Cities – Integrated Urban Water Management (Issue 4), Making Water Decisions for Climate Change Adaptation (Issue 5), Biodiversity Protection and Water Security (Issue 6). Special sessions related to Issues 4 and 5 were held during the 18th World Water Congress in Beijing and featured chapter authors, as well as i-WSSM and an IWRA World Water Envoy. UNESCO was also featured during the Issue 4 special session. Due to review process changes, related to the chapter approvals, publication of Issue 4 and 5 has been delayed. Publication is anticipated in early 2024, with online webinars to follow.

A call for chapter proposals for Issue 6 was initiated in 2023. To date, an Editorial Board has reviewed the proposals and identified 19 approved chapters, 11 of which have responded with draft chapters that were sent for peer review. Peer reviewers were recruited from IWRA membership. Eight chapters have since been approved to proceed to the second draft stage. Pending timely responses by authors for peer review and Editorial Board comments in return, publication of Issue 6 is expected in the latter half of 2024.



## UN-WATER

IWRA remains an official partner of UN-Water. Aligned with the celebrations of World Water Day (22 March) and World Toilet Day (19 November), IWRA held two dedicated webinars on Accelerating Change. These successful webinars brought together the technical aspects of valuing water with more broad and holistic perspectives. Nearly 500 registered attendees participated in these webinars.

Since 2013, World Toilet Day has been an official UN day, and IWRA remains committed to collaborating with other UN-Water partners and members to raise awareness and focus action on the global sanitation crisis and to advocate for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6. IWRA also sits on the steering committee of the UN Water Task Force.

## UN 2023 WATER CONFERENCE

During the UN 2023 Water Conference, which took place 22-24 March 2023 in New York, IWRA played an important role in engaging in conversations and building dialogues around the bold actions needed for water resources future. Having gained Special Consultative Status by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (UN-ECOSOC), IWRA was well represented by President Yuanyuan Li, Vice President Lesha Witmer, Executive Director Callum Clench, Deputy Executive Director Ignacio Deregibus, and members of the Executive Board, Renée Martin-Nagle, Tom Soo, Tom Williams, Eric Tardieu, Dahlia Sabri, and IWRA Task Force Chair on Water Security, Amgad Elmahdi.

IWRA representatives provided valuable support and input to sessions and discussions. IWRA has also added its pledge to the Water Action Agenda: "Making water resources research and scientific knowledge more accessible to and usable by practitioners, policymakers, and the public at large."

IWRA led a side event, "Water-Economy-Ecology Nexus in a Changing Environment: A Roadmap from New York to Beijing to Bali," on 23 March, focused on how the water needs of humans and nature can be balanced within the water-economy-ecology nexus in our changing environment. The event featured the best practices of the Netherlands, Tajikistan, China, and Indonesia—co-hosts of the 2023 UN Water Conference, the XVIII World Water Congress, and the 10th World Water Forum, respectively—to produce responses that will support the achievement of the SDGs.



Prior to the conference, IWRA participated in two virtual events:

- Water and SDGs: Downscaling Water-Related SDGs (DWAT-SDGs), Dahlia Sabri, Board Director, IWRA; Raya Marina Stephan, Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Water International; and Ximing Cai, Chair, DWAT-SDGs Task Force, IWRA, as Speakers
- Sustainable Water Engineering: Bringing Together the Global Community, Yuanyuan Li, President, IWRA, as a Speaker; and Tom Soo, Board Director, IWRA, as a Moderator.

IWRA members also participated in several partner events, as panellists:

- Strengthening climate resilience through expansion of investment in the water sector, Callum Clench, Executive Director, IWRA, as Speaker
- Water for Nature, Nature for Water: Integrated Policy Solutions and Commitments for Sustainable Development and the Conservation, Restoration, and Management of Freshwater Biodiversity, Renee Martin-Nagle, Treasurer, IWRA, as Moderator; and Eric Tardieu, Secretary General, IWRA, as Speaker.
- Resilient Rivers to Healthy Coasts for People and the Planet: An Integrated River Basin Management Approach, Yuanyuan Li, President of the IWRA, as Speaker
- 10-year anniversary of the OECD Water Governance Initiative, with Callum Clench, Executive Director, IWRA, as Speaker
- Islands for Sustainability: Delivering SDG6 in Small Island States, Callum Clench, Executive Director, IWRA, as Speaker



## SOUTH AFRICA'S WATER RESEARCH COMMISSION

IWRA partnered with the Water Research Commission for its second Master Classes series on 'Institutional Responsibility in support of SDG 6 and the rights to water

and sanitation. The masterclass took place in early 2023. There are ongoing discussions for further collaborations.



## SDGS

In 2023, IWRA started a project with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Sustainable Development membership and partners titled, “Making water resources research and scientific knowledge more accessible to and usable by practitioners, policymakers and the public at large”. The aim of this project is to develop an approach and methodology to make research and scientific knowledge more accessible and usable by practitioners, policymakers, and the public at large.

The expert group will aim to investigate:

- Language used - avoiding jargon as much as possible.
- Methodologies for dissemination (online and offline; workshops; connecting to more local NGOs/CSO and umbrella organisations, usable by different target groups and levels of education).
- Mapping successful approaches for getting more relevant information “on-the-ground”
- How to make the information even more interdisciplinary.
- How to combine with other sources of knowledge and experience.
- Develop capacity development modules to be used by teachers and trainers.

The development process for this project is anticipated to take 2 to 3 years. Current partners include Project Water Education Today (WET), UNESCO, Science Division, Texas A&M University, IHE-Delft, and World Water Quality Alliance (WWQA), Social Engagement Platform.

## WORLD WATER COUNCIL

IWRA remains a member of the Board of Governors for the World Water Council. Now serving its second consecutive Term. IWRA President Yuanyuan Li is the Governor, and Executive Director Callum Clench is the Alternate Governor, representing the IWRA community at Board of Governor Meetings.

In addition to attending Board of Governor meetings, IWRA attended the Kick-off meeting for the 10<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, in Jakarta, Indonesia, which took place in February 2023, as well as the 2nd Stakeholder Meeting held in Bali in October 2023. These events were attended by Callum Clench, IWRA Executive Director, Eric Tardieu, IWRA’s Secretary General (and Vice President of the World Water Council), Guy Fradin, Executive Board Director and former IWRA President, and Patrick Lavarde. Monica Garcia Quesada also attended the second meeting to promote the Smart Water Management Project, and IWRA’s involvement in the preparatory process for the 10th World Water Forum continues to grow, with a focus on both Smart Water Management, and Water and Islands.



## SMART CITY EXPO WORLD CONGRESS

For the second time, IWRA was a Collaborating Organisation Partner for the Smart City Expo World Congress that took place from 7–9 November 2023, in Barcelona. In collaboration with K-water (Korea Water Resources Corporation) and the Asia Water Council, IWRA hosted a side event titled “The Smart Water Cities Certification: Helping Cities to Become Smart and Sustainable. This event, held from 8-10 November, provided a platform for experts and professionals in the smart city domain.



Callum Clench (IWRA Executive Director) initiated the session by outlining the objectives and key findings of the Smart Water Cities project. Monica Garcia Quesada (IWRA Project Officer) delved into the Governance pillar, emphasising its role in the Smart Water Cities Index. Jang Su Hyung (K-water) explored the technical pillar and its associated discoveries. Oh Jung Jin (K-water) shared insights into the innovative approaches of the Busan Eco Delta Smart City in the Republic of Korea.

The Smart City Expo World Congress is a leading international event for the smart city sector, a key meeting point for experts and leaders of the world’s most innovative cities, companies, research centres.

**COP28**

Having received United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) observer status, IWRA was represented at the COP28 by its Board Director, Dahlia Sabri, who provided valuable insights into Nature Based Solutions (NbS) through the session, “We are Water Security, We are a Solution – Nature Based Solutions (NbS) for Water Security in Cities.” The session was organised by CAF – Banco de Desarrollo de América Latina y el Caribbean, and was held at the Latin America and Caribbean Pavilion. This session explored the practical applications of NBCs in water security projects and underscored the seamless integration of solutions within traditional (gray) infrastructure, yielding not only comprehensive and efficient outcomes but also environmentally friendly ones.

The discussions showcased the potential of integrating NbS with existing infrastructure, presenting a harmonious approach that enhances urban environments. Beyond

its focus on water security, Dahlia Sabri and the other speakers also emphasised the broader advantages of adopting sustainable practices in our cities. These discussions mark exciting times ahead as we embark on innovative pathways towards a greener and more resilient future.

**ACCREDITATIONS**

On 25 July 2023, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) adopted the recommendation of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to grant special consultative status to IWRA. Consultative status for an organisation enables the Association to engage with ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies, the Human Rights Council and, under specific conditions, some meetings of the General Assembly and other intergovernmental bodies, as well as with the United Nations Secretariat. This is an important achievement for IWRA. It also provides important privileges (e.g. register and participate in UN and UN-related meetings, events, conferences, or activities as an observer; submit written statements to the Council, make oral presentations with ECOSOC, send consultation proposals, and use UN facilities). It also encompasses certain obligations (i.e. drafting reports or updating its contact information regularly).

IWRA continues to maintain also its United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) observer status, allowing it to participate more fully in the Climate COPs by send delegates to the “Blue Zone” at each COP.

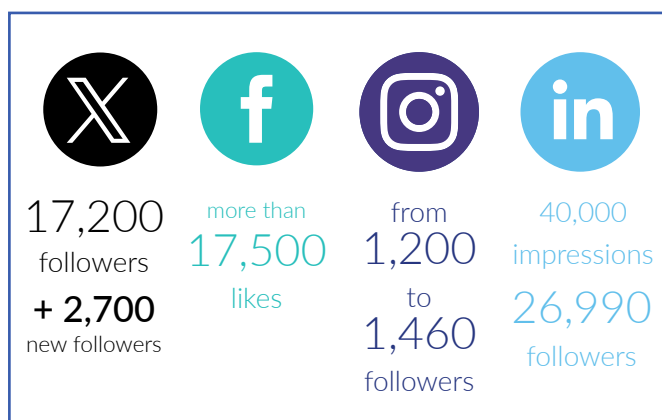
# SOCIAL MEDIA & MEDIA COVERAGE



Social media channels play a huge role in promoting IWRA's activities, sharing knowledge, and raising brand awareness. IWRA's platforms experienced increases in both followers and engagement in 2023, which ultimately contributed to the increase in event participation as well as an increase in new IWRA members. The main platforms are X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Instagram.

IWRA's success extended beyond social media growth. In 2023, our Executive Director, Callum Clench, was honoured with the prestigious 'Association Executive of the Year' award at the annual International & European Association Awards. IWRA's Events Officer, Andrea Santos, was also acknowledged as one of the '50 Most Influential Event Professionals' by the EVENTEX Awards. These accolades underscore the dedication and excellence demonstrated by the IWRA team.

In addition to these achievements, IWRA garnered further visibility through promotions and features in various online newspapers and portals.



## WORLD WATER CONGRESS COVERAGE

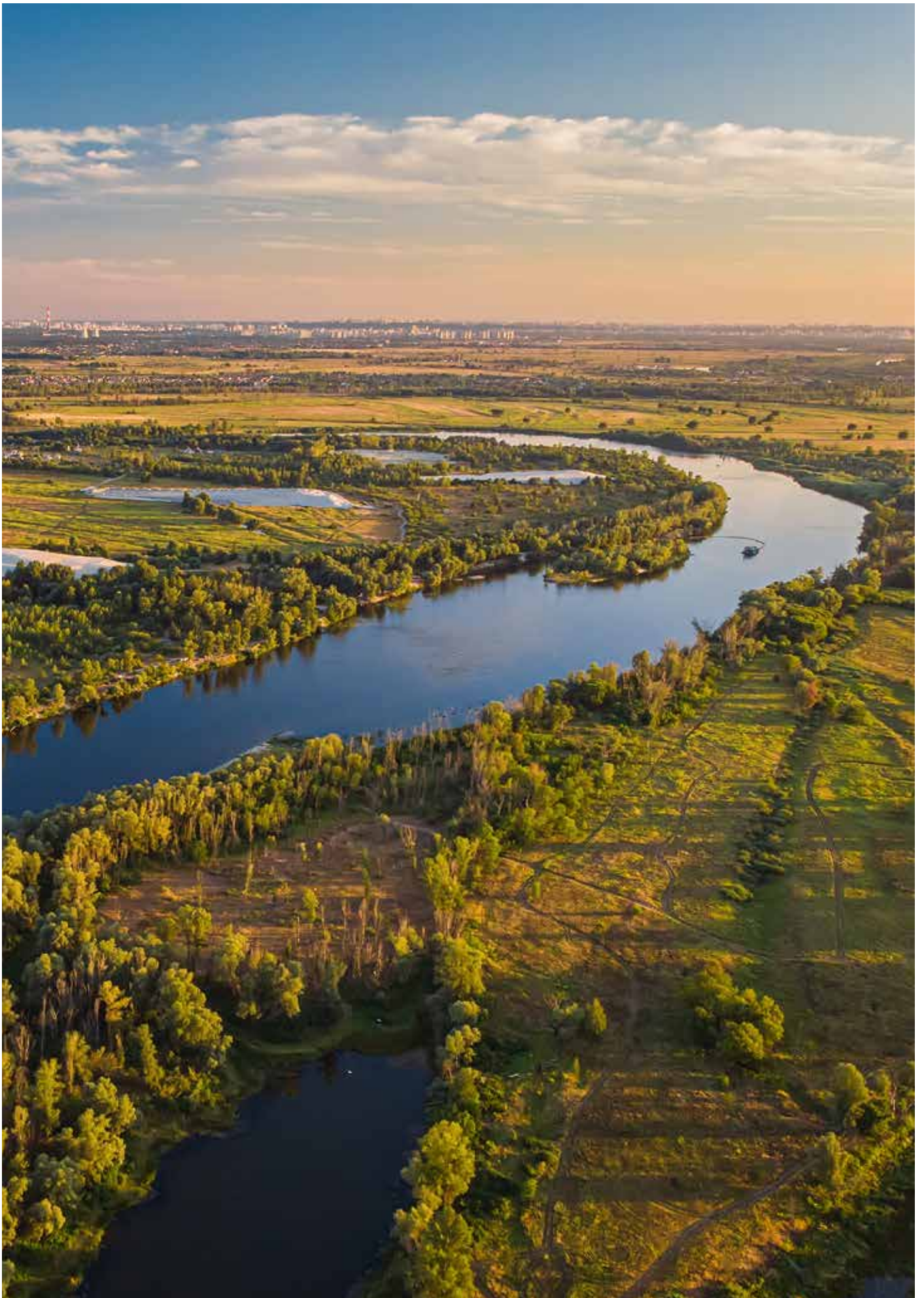
- **Title:** IWRA World Water Congress (Sep 2023), Beijing  
**China Publisher:** SDG Knowledge Hub Link: [SDG Knowledge Hub](#)
- **Title:** China gathers global wisdom in water governance at World Water Congress  
**Publisher:** Pakistan Today Link: [Pakistan Today](#)
- **Title:** Beyond boundaries: China's vision for sustainable water solutions  
**Publisher:** CGTN Link: [CGTN](#)
- **Title:** 18<sup>th</sup> World Water Congress kicks off in Beijing  
**Publisher:** GazetteNGR Link: [GazetteNGR](#)
- **Title:** IWRA World Water Congress (Sep 2023), Beijing  
**China Publisher:** China Daily  
**Links:**
  - [China Daily 1](#)
  - [China Daily 2](#)
  - [China Daily 3](#)
  - [China Daily 4](#)
  - [China Daily 5](#)
  - [China Daily 6](#)

## OTHER COVERAGE

- **Title:** IWRA Publication Mentorship Initiative 2023  
**Publisher:** Opportunity Desk Link: [Opportunity Desk](#)
- **Title:** International Water Resources Association's (IWRA) 1<sup>st</sup> Islands Water Congress  
**Publisher:** Island Innovation Link: [Island Innovation](#)









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