IWA Climate Smart Utilities Initiative Recognition Programme Framework

2026 Guidance for Applicants

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Introduction

The 2015 Paris Agreement set a goal to limit the increase in average global temperature to below 2 °C and pursue efforts to limit warming to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels. However, the world is not on track. Global temperatures continue to rise rapidly: 2024 was the first year in which the global average temperature temporarily exceeded 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels. Current climate predictions indicate an **86% probability that at least one year between 2025 and 2029 will exceed 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels**, and a **70% probability that the five-year average will reach or exceed this threshold** (WMO, 2025[1]). Under current policies, global warming is projected to reach around 2–3 °C by the end of the century, with a median estimate of approximately **2.8 °C** (IPCC, 2023[2]), posing severe risks to ecosystems, infrastructure, and human well-being. Avoiding the most catastrophic consequences requires urgent and coordinated global action.

Urban water management — including drinking water supply, wastewater treatment, and urban drainage — is **among the services most directly affected by climate change**. Increasing droughts, floods, sea-level rise, and extreme weather events are already challenging the ability of utilities to deliver safe and reliable services, protect rivers and oceans, and safeguard communities and infrastructure. At the same time, water and sanitation utilities are **critical actors in cities' climate responses**. Beyond strengthening resilience and enabling climate adaptation, utilities can contribute to climate mitigation: water and wastewater systems are responsible for a significant share of urban energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, but they also offer major opportunities for decarbonisation through energy efficiency, renewable energy production, and circular resource recovery. Studies indicate that utilities can help **reduce up to 15% of urban greenhouse gas emissions**, making them key contributors to both mitigation and adaptation strategies.

Despite this potential, utilities often face structural barriers when embracing transformative change. These include the complexity and criticality of their operations, institutional cultures shaped by risk-averse decision making, long-term infrastructure investments with lifetimes of **20–50 years**, and regulatory or governance frameworks that may not yet fully enable climate adaptation or decarbonisation actions.

In response to these challenges, the International Water Association launched the **Climate Smart Utilities Initiative** in 2020 to support utilities worldwide in addressing climate change in a systematic and collaborative way. The initiative aims to help utilities assess climate risks, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, strengthen resilience, and contribute to broader city-level climate strategies. This document refers to the original strategy proposed in 2020, reviews its development and implementation since its launch, and proposes adjustments to strengthen the initiative and accelerate climate action across the global water sector. It demonstrates how the Climate Smart Utilities Initiative directly operationalises the climate and resilience priorities set out in the IWA Strategic Plan 2025–2030[3], translating the association's strategic objectives into practical, actionable support for utilities globally.

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[1] **WMO (2025).** *Global Annual to Decadal Climate Update (2025–2029).* Geneva: World Meteorological Organization. Available at: https://public.wmo.int/en/resources/library/global-annual-decadal-climate-update-2025-2029

[2] **IPCC (2023).** *Climate Change 2023: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.* Geneva: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Available at: https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/

[3] **IWA 2025-2030 Strategic Plan** https://iwa-website-assets.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/IWA_Strategic_Plan_2025_2030_6e838a733e.pdf

IWA Climate Smart Utilities Recognition Programme

This document aims to present the framework of the **IWA Climate Smart Utilities Recognition Programme**. The Recognition Programme began in 2022 and is assessed during the IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition (WWCE) and the IWA Water and Development Congress & Exhibition (WDCE). When it was launched in 2022, it was the first Recognition programme of IWA focused on utilities and climate. Past editions include:

- 2022 IWA WWCE, Copenhagen, Denmark (inaugural edition)
- 2023 IWA WDCE, Kigali, Rwanda (special focus on low- and middle-income countries)
- 2024 IWA WWCE, Toronto, Canada
- 2025 IWA WDCE, Bangkok, Thailand (special focus on low- and middle-income countries)

The **Climate Smart Utilities Recognition Programme** aims to inspire utilities to become increasingly climate-smart and embrace the cultural shift needed for a water-wise future. It is built around three interconnected pillars:

1. **Adaptation** – planning resilient infrastructure that combines centralised and decentralised approaches, as well as natural and built systems. *This includes resilience-building through infrastructure and operating models designed to absorb and recover from unplanned critical events (e.g., flooding, sewer overflows, abrupt pollution loads), with multi-purpose assets and processes that perform in both "normal" and "crisis response" modes, supported by preparedness and response arrangements*.
2. **Mitigation** – monitoring and reducing GHG emissions, including transitioning toward resource recovery. *This also includes embedding mitigation criteria into Design–Build–Operate decision-making (retrofit and greenfield), such as whole-life/carbon-informed design, procurement, and operational optimisation — beyond single mitigation projects.*
3. **Leadership** – engaging citizens, industries, regulators, and other stakeholders to drive resilient, low-carbon utility models and inspire action at national and international levels.

Through their applications, utilities can reflect on their progress, benchmark themselves against *ideal* Climate Smart Utility indicators, and identify opportunities for improvement.

All applications will be pre-screened by IWA Secretariat and reviewed by a Jury[4].

Objectives:

- **Increase awareness** – by sharing best practices through Climate Smart Stories, webinars, publications, and a dedicated resource platform.
- **Inspire action** – by presenting the ideal Climate Smart Utility via the Guidance Framework and enabling peer-to-peer exchange through the Community of Practice.

[4] The jury will be composed of: (a) IWA members (researchers and practitioners) with a track record in water and sanitation utility work; (b) Consultants advising utilities; (c) 1 representative from the sponsoring organisation (if any); (d) Representatives from the IWA Climate Smart Utilities Initiative Steering Committee.

- **Celebrate progress** – recognising achievements encourages broader stakeholder engagement and motivates continued climate-smart initiatives.

Target Applicants

Applications to the 2026 IWA Climate Smart Utilities Recognition Programme are open to water and sanitation utilities from both high and low- and middle-income countries.

Timeline

The following timeline is anticipated:

Activity	Date
Open applications	18 June 2026
End of Application	18 July 2026
Review applications by Jury	22 July – 12 August 2026
Successful applications are selected and notified	14 August 2026
Plan and provide support to utilities for the recognition programme session and awards	14 Aug-30 September 2026
Recognition programme Workshop and Awards at the IWA WWCE 2026, Glasgow	4-8 October 2026

Structure of the Recognition Programme

Application criteria

- Water and sanitation utilities from both high and low- and middle-income countries can apply.
- In instances where different parts of the water system are managed by various utilities or municipal agencies in a metropolitan area, these can either:
    - **Apply as a group**, with a lead utility collecting contributions from other relevant utilities and agencies as co-applicants; or
    - **Apply as individual utilities**, ignoring the sections not relevant to them. Other urban stakeholders (managing other parts of the water cycle, urban planning, energy, or waste) may be associated with the application as co-applicants.
- IWA members and non-IWA members can apply. However, only recognised utilities that are IWA members will be allowed to take part in the activities of the CSU Communities of Practice.
- Utilities already recognised in previous years cannot apply again.

Why should you apply?

Applying to the recognition programme is an excellent way to gain recognition and share best practices towards becoming a Climate Smart player in the water sector. The recognition programme offers an **outstanding opportunity** to reflect on your Climate Smart journey,

ensure visibility for your actions to an international audience, and share your aspirations to achieve a climate-smart water sector. Joining the recognition programme is also an effective way to facilitate knowledge exchange and international collaboration with other utilities. Specific benefits include:

1. **Global visibility:** Premier utilities will receive formal recognition at the IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition, Glasgow, Scotland, on 4-8 October 2026.
2. **Financial support:** A comprehensive financial incentive package covering flight expenses, conference registration fees, and accommodation in Glasgow will be provided to the top 3 utilities of the achiever and entrant categories (*even years*) and top 3 outstanding categories (*odd years*).
3. **Presentation opportunities:** The top utilities will have the opportunity to present in a dedicated Climate Smart Recognition workshop session during the Congress.
4. **Case stories:** All recognised utilities in both categories will develop a case story highlighting their achievements, to be featured across IWA's communication channels.
5. **Expanded networking:** Utilities will have the chance to engage in IWA conferences, webinars, and other external events supported by IWA, representing their respective organisations.
6. **Access to a global community of like-minded professionals:** All participants will be granted access to the IWA Climate Smart Utilities Community of Practice.

How to apply?

The applicant's utility must complete the Application Form (Annex 1).

In even years, the Recognition Programme is linked to the IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition (WWCE); therefore, applications are open to water and sanitation utilities worldwide. Applicants may apply under two categories: **Achiever** and **Entrant**.

- **Entrant category:** The Entrant category is designed for utilities that are at the early stages of their Climate Smart journey. These utilities are typically beginning to define their climate vision, build internal awareness, and implement foundational actions. Submissions are expected to demonstrate initial commitments, emerging plans, and early implementation efforts across adaptation, mitigation, and leadership dimensions.
- **Achiever category:** The Achiever category is intended for utilities that have made substantial progress in their Climate Smart journey and are actively implementing and scaling solutions. These utilities demonstrate established strategies, measurable results, and evidence of sustained action across adaptation, mitigation, and leadership. Submissions are expected to show maturity, impact, and clear pathways toward long-term climate resilience and sustainability.

The **top three recognised utilities** in each category (Achiever and Entrant) will be featured in a **dedicated workshop** at the IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition (WWCE). One representative from each of these utilities will receive **complimentary Congress registration**. For selected utilities based in low-, lower-middle-, and upper-middle-income countries, **travel and accommodation support** will also be provided for one representative.

In odd years, the Recognition Programme is linked to the Water and Development Congress & Exhibition, and applications are **open exclusively to water and sanitation utilities from low- and middle-income countries**. In these years, there are no application categories; however, the jury will recognise three **outstanding** applications, and the selected utilities will be sponsored to attend the Congress.

For all applicants, the application includes a three-page narrative summarising the utility's Climate Smart vision and the key actions undertaken towards becoming a Climate Smart Utility. The narrative should highlight any exceptional initiatives related to the three pillars of the IWA Climate Smart framework:

1. **Adaptation** – planning and implementing adaptive infrastructure approaches that combine centralised and decentralised solutions. Applicants are encouraged to describe *resilience-building measures* that enable services to continue during shocks (e.g., surge capacity, redundancy, smart controls, emergency operating modes), and any *preparedness actions* (plans, drills, mutual aid, public readiness) supporting response and recovery.
2. **Mitigation** – transitioning towards resource recovery and circular economy practices (e.g., biogas production, nutrient and by-product recovery) while reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Applicants are encouraged to describe how mitigation is incorporated into *asset lifecycle decisions* (design standards, procurement criteria, construction methods, operational strategies), including how trade-offs are assessed for retrofit and greenfield projects (e.g., embedded/capital carbon and operational carbon where feasible).
3. **Leadership** – engaging citizens, industries, and stakeholders in source control and water stewardship initiatives (e.g., reducing micropollutants in wastewater and protecting water sources), while building resilience through approaches such as water reuse in response to water scarcity. Leadership may also include convening partners for *shared preparedness* (e.g., flood response coordination, public communication protocols, vulnerable-customer readiness) to support system-wide resilience.

Under each pillar, criteria are described below. The applicant may select a few or all criteria **to propose a self-evaluation regarding: 1) actions taken and their results, 2) actions in planning, and 3) gaps they are planning to address.**

Utilities applying under the **Achiever** category, in even years, are required to complete the Indicators Form (Annex 2).

GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK FOR APPLICATIONS

A Guidance Framework is provided to guide the narrative submitted by the applicant utility.

The approach is based on defining **the ideal utility for each criterion**[5]. Following this, the applicant utility is tasked to formulate its own narrative, outlining its current position and future aspirations towards an ideal Climate Smart Utility.

Overall Assessment

The jury will assess each application using the following criteria:

a) The application is sound and demonstrates the utility overall commitment to the climate agenda. (Yes/No)
b) Sharing the content of the application (narrative, actions, and aspirations) will be valuable for the international water community and IWA members. (Yes/No)
c) Applications presented under adaptation, including resilience-building approaches that strengthen continuity of service during shocks and recovery can be replicated for utilities facing similar challenges (1 to 5)
d) Applications presented under mitigation, including mitigation embedded into design/build/operate decisions, not only stand-alone projects can be replicated for utilities facing similar challenges (1 to 5)
e) Applications presented under leadership can be replicated for utilities facing similar challenges (1 to 5)
f) Components presented under adaptation, including multi-purpose infrastructure/operations that perform in both normal and crisis-response conditions are innovative (1 to 5)
g) Components presented under mitigation, including whole-life approaches (e.g., operational + embedded/capital carbon considerations where feasible) are innovative (1 to 5)
h) Components presented under leadership are innovative (1 to 5)
i) Overall score for the application (1 to 5)
j) The overall approach presented is ambitious, considering the utility's context and current challenges. (Yes/No)
k) Overall reasoning (indicating adaptation, mitigation and leadership) for recognising the applicant. (open-ended response). NB. *Evidence of resilience-building/preparedness and of mitigation integration into design/build/operate decision-making (as applicable to the utility's context) will be taken into consideration*.

PILLARS

The jury will assess the applications based on the three pillars (*adaptation, mitigation, leadership*) and the respective indicators. Those applying to the *Achiever Category* must also submit the additional information in Annex 2.

[5] The criteria are largely inspired by the CRC Water Sensitive City Index and the City Water Resilience Framework

1. ADAPTATION:

Description: Essential services are delivered while reducing the risk of failure in the face of climate change threats.

Climate Smart Utilities plan to anticipate future threats from climate change impacts to their services: potable water supply, sanitation, drainage, and the protection of the ecological health of water bodies. Investments to increase resilience contribute to reducing GHG emissions when possible.

This translates into the following indicators:

1.1. Diversifying the water portfolio and lowering water use

Ideal utility: *Safe and secure water is available to everyone for drinking and other consumptive purposes. The utility's strategy is to reduce water losses and water use concerning local scarcity trends, droughts, and diversifying alternative water sources, including wastewater recycling, rainwater harvesting, conjunctive & sustainable groundwater extraction, desalination, and innovative technologies (like Atmospheric Water Generation when needed) to achieve a positive water balance under the impacts of climate change. Multiple sources feed a diversified water supply system providing fit-for-purpose water. A long-term water strategy is in place, including promoting low-carbon investment choices and protecting water sources using nature-based solutions, storage, and recharge as much as possible.*

1.2. Adapting sanitation strategies to the impacts of climate change

Ideal utility: *All households are either connected to a sewer system or otherwise have a hygienic facility in-house (flush/pour flush to sewer, septic tank, pit latrine, or composting toilet). There is also a safe protocol for the disposal of bio-solids/sludge, and the generated faecal sludge is managed in a secure manner, encompassing containment, regular emptying, safe transportation, treatment, and responsible disposal or reuse. These measures align with the goals of safely managed sanitation as outlined in SDG 6.2 and are reflected in the Citywide Inclusive Sanitation (CWIS) approach promoted by the IWA Inclusive Urban Sanitation Initiative.*

The utility is service-oriented and outcome-focused. Discharge to the environment that causes public health risks is prevented (including leaks) or treated at wastewater and faecal sludge/ septage treatment plants to protect the ecological health of water bodies prior to release. The utility is adapting its sanitation strategies, collection, and treatment systems to respond to lower low flows and higher high flows induced by climate change and to an increased sensitivity of aquatic ecosystems, which demand enhanced discharge requirements. The system considers planning for growth and the impacts of climate change on the receiving water bodies' capacity to absorb the treated discharge. These strategies include a combination of centralised and decentralised infrastructure and the use of nature-based solutions, small-bore sewer systems, and other innovative and affordable solutions wherever applicable and ensure circularity. A long-term adaptation strategy is in place to promote low-carbon investments.

1.3. Adequate drainage to manage rainwater and reduce the risk of flooding rivers

Ideal utility: *Rainfall events do not disrupt everyday activities, and potential risks are well understood. Risks to human safety due to excessive rainfall are minimal to nonexistent, and managing run-off quality, infrastructure, and property damage are infrequent by ensuring resilient infrastructure and integrated planning with other stakeholders. Discharge of rainwater drainage to water bodies is treated as necessary to preserve their ecological health. A coordinated and integrated response is undertaken with urban planning to promote retention, reuse, and/or infiltration where possible ("Sponge City" concept, Sustainable Urban Drainage, Infiltration trenches/wells), and with upstream land management to reduce the risk of dysfunction of the drainage and sewer systems and guarantee public health under all scenarios. Where feasible, drainage and sewer assets are designed/operated with multi-purpose capacity (everyday performance + extreme-event performance), supported by agreed emergency procedures with city stakeholders. A long-term rainwater management strategy is in place, accounting for the impact of climate change and promoting low-carbon investments.*

1.4. Promote robust and adaptive infrastructure

Ideal utility: *The system has redundancy and bypass systems, and infrastructure integrity is actively monitored. The number and frequency of failures per capita per year are exceptionally low. Integrated intelligent controls are typical across all scales and allow the operation and performance of multifunctional assets to be optimised. System capacity and resources at all levels can typically be monitored and adjusted in real-time. Critical assets and operating procedures are designed for continuity of service during extreme events (e.g., surge hydraulic capacity, overflow/pollution control where relevant, safe fail modes), with defined preparedness and response arrangements (risk registers, emergency plans, exercises, mutual aid, and clear public communication protocols). Access to adequate funding for maintenance activities is available (perhaps secured through user-based charges). Long-term maintenance needs are well understood, planned for, and undertaken to a reasonable standard. Maintenance guidelines and procedures are well documented. Assets are all recorded on a GIS system and supported by comprehensive databases. Asset audits and proactive maintenance programmes are undertaken. Asset information is used to adapt practices and foster innovation. Co-operation between multiple asset owners occurs to ensure the upkeep of all assets at all scales is maintained to enable integrated operation.*

2. MITIGATION:

Description: GHG emissions are reduced.

The transition towards becoming Climate Smart is facilitated by a reduction in the utility's GHG emissions with well-defined and strategically planned reduction targets implemented throughout the entire service chain. This includes embedding mitigation criteria into planning, design, procurement, construction, and operations (retrofit and greenfield) so that low-carbon choices become standard practice rather than isolated projects. This is achieved through various actions that reduce energy consumption in abstraction, treatment, & distribution.

Additionally, direct GHG emissions from sanitation and wastewater systems are minimised (for instance, by reducing N_2O or CH_4 emissions during the treatment process and decreasing chemical usage) through the application of innovative technologies. Furthermore, the utility has the potential to optimise resource recovery. This not only aids in the reduction of global GHG emissions beyond the utility's boundaries but also leads to the generation of renewable energy or the creation of new materials from waste.

This translates into the following indicators:

2.1. Low GHG emissions level

Ideal utility: *Very low GHG emissions levels are achieved without accounting for the purchase of carbon offsets. The utility has significantly reduced the GHG emissions per population served in the last ten years. GHG emissions are assessed using the latest version of the Energy Performance and Carbon Emissions Assessment and Monitoring (ECAM) tool to ensure consistency of approaches between utilities. An alternative tool may be considered if it covers at the minimum the emissions reported in ECAM, include GHG emissions from scope 1 and 2 and some elements of scope 3, as defined by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCC)* and is consistent with the methodological guidance provided in the *2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* and the *2019 Refinement to the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories and demonstrated water industry best practice.*

2.2. Maximised resource recovery to offset GHG emissions within and outside of the utility boundary through carbon substitution

Ideal utility: *High levels of resource recovery are achieved across available recoverable resources. The resource recovery approach is common across all new water and sanitation infrastructure, and progressive infrastructure upgrades are in planning.*

2.3. High energy efficiency of the water supply and sanitation systems

Ideal utility: *The water supply system (from abstraction to consumer) has high energy efficiency, uses smart technologies, and has a very low leakage level. The sanitation treatment system, (combined / or not), is energy efficient regarding the type of treatment provided. New assets are being planned with the goal to be low-energy and low-carbon. Decision-making for new and retrofit assets considers whole-life impacts (operational carbon and, where feasible, embedded/capital carbon) alongside performance, risk, and cost.*

3. LEADERSHIP:

Description: The applicant is a local, national, and international leader.

Climate Smart Utilities are leaders driving the transition through the exchange of knowledge and the development of innovative, equitable solutions for climate adaptation and the reduction of GHG emissions. This translates into a robust culture of learning and sharing on local, national, and international levels. Ensuring gender, diversity, equity, and inclusion is crucial for utilities that are both inclusive and climate-smart. Vulnerable and marginalised

individuals and groups, including low-income communities, informal settlements, and slums, are the most impacted by the effects of climate change on water and sanitation services. As such, utilities must adopt, develop, and implement climate-smart policies, strategies, and actions that are fair, inclusive, and sensitive to gender considerations.

This translates into the following indicators:

3.1. Empowering citizens and urban planners as partners of the Climate Smart Utility

Ideal utility: *The transition towards becoming Climate Smart is facilitated by the utility taking on a leadership role within local governance structures. This is aimed at promoting reductions in GHG emissions on a metropolitan scale and enhancing the awareness and planning capabilities of all urban stakeholders in order to prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change on water resources. This translates into the utility playing significant role in: 1. Integrating water and sanitation into urban planning, 2. increasing the water and sanitation literacy of urban professionals and citizens to ensure community support for actions taken,3. Preparing for crisis management regarding water and sanitation-related hazards (e.g., floods and droughts), 4. Implementing a collaborative approach and forging partnerships to enhance stakeholder engagement (e.g., incentives-based). Citizens play an integral part in these solutions through their behaviour. They actively contribute to source control (e.g., reducing micropollutants in wastewater, safeguarding water sources, and safely managing the sanitation chain) to lower treatment costs and the associated energy usage. They also embrace water reuse approaches to bolster their resilience in the face of future water scarcity.*

3.2. Strong learning culture

Ideal utility: *The utility has a strong learning culture, ensuring that knowledge and skill requirements are consistently reviewed and updated. Staff members enhance their expertise by actively engaging in research alongside both local and international scientific communities. Moreover, utility staff cultivate multidisciplinary skills and knowledge in various water-related fields, such as landscape and ecology, social and urban design, and architecture. This broader skill set enables them to contribute effectively to projects and decision-making within metropolitan institutions or governance structures.*

3.3. National & international leadership

Ideal utility: *The utility actively disseminates its experiences with other utilities at both the national and international levels. It aims to further its understanding of achieving and enhancing the Climate Smart water and sanitation agenda. This involves participation in benchmarking and best-practice programmes. Additionally, the utility develops partnerships to facilitate the exchange of knowledge on technology, innovation, research, and specific operational issues pertaining to climate adaptation and the reduction of operational carbon footprint.*

3.4. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Ideal utility: *The utility's mission and vision wholeheartedly embody Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) principles, shaping both its internal operations and external interactions. This dedication is evident in its policies, strategic planning, cultural integration, training initiatives, accountability measures, diversity strategies, and the integration of DEI considerations in decision-making processes. The utility also ensures a well-balanced and engaged workforce by adhering to best practices in promoting and mainstreaming gender, diversity, and inclusion in its leadership, management (including representation in water boards and management committees), capacity-building activities, and throughout the entire employment cycle (from diagnosis and attraction to recruitment, advancement, and retention.*

3.5. Innovation excellence: crafting sustainable water and sanitation solutions

Ideal utility: *The ideal utility demonstrates innovation across technology, practices, financial models, risk management and insurance, GHG emissions reduction, and adaptation strategies. Its leadership fosters a culture of strategic vision, collaborative governance, agile decision-making, and empowerment, driving transformative change. Through continuous innovations in the above-mentioned domains, the utility promotes creativity, inclusivity, and excellence at all levels, ensuring sustainable and resilient water and sanitation services for communities.*

Annex 1 - APPLICATION FORM

1. Contact information

First name:
Last name:
Organisation:
Role at organisation:
Country of residence:
Email:
IWA membership number (if applicable):
If you are not a member, would you like to be contacted by the IWA membership team for membership and engagement?

Note: we recommend that all applying utilities obtain an IWA membership to facilitate future knowledge exchange. However, you may submit your application even if you have not finalised your membership. Only IWA members will be invited to take part in the CSU Community of Practice.

2. Specify your utility type

Tick the most appropriate:

☐ Water utility

☐ Urban drainage

☐ Sanitation utility[6]

3. For which category are you applying for?

☐ Entrant Category

☐ Achiever Category - please download and submit the indicators document

4. Additional documents

Please feel free to add the following information:

- Indicators Document – **Mandatory** if applying for the achiever category
- Contact details of relevant individuals to discuss technical content
- High-quality, relevant, and original pictures (optional)
- Any additional supporting documents or resources to share with the jury (optional)

[6] Sanitation utilities are defined as service providers engages in the collection, transport, treatment and disposal or reuse of human excreta, domestic wastewater and solid waste, and associated hygiene promotion (Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council, UN).

Narrative

The applicant utility must submit a 3-page narrative summarising their vision and the key actions taken towards being a Climate Smart Utility, highlighting anything exceptional that is undertaken concerning the 3-pillar definition proposed by IWA: *adaptation, mitigation and leadership*, as described in the Guidance Framework.

Utilities should provide ***a description of the actions taken, the actions in planning, and the gaps or challenges identified, even those not yet addressed. Where relevant, include (i) resilience-building and preparedness actions that support continuity of service during extreme events, and (ii) how mitigation criteria are integrated into design/build/operate decisions (retrofit and greenfield)***

Notes:

If a component under any of the pillars has not been addressed by your utility, please mention "yet to address or implement". The submission must not exceed 3 pages, excluding any additional material or supporting documentation.

Keep in mind the Climate Smart pillars:

1. ***Adaptation****: planning for resilient adaptive infrastructure that combines centralised and decentralised approaches, as well as natural and built infrastructure.*
2. ***Mitigation****: monitoring and reducing GHG emissions by, among other things, transitioning to being resource producers.*
3. ***Leadership****: engaging citizens, industries, and stakeholders to embrace the change needed for a resilient and low-carbon model. Engaging regulators and inspiring other utilities at national and international levels to take Climate Smart action for a water-wise future.*

Utilities should describe ***the actions taken, the actions in planning, and the gaps or challenges identified, even those not yet addressed.***

For more information about the IWA Climate Smart Utilities Recognition Programme, please consult the Recognition Programme Framework or contact Samuela Guida at samuela.guida@iwahq.org.

Please type or copy-paste here your Climate Smart application (3 pages maximum).

☐ I agree to the assessment conditions and to be contacted in relation to the application.

☐ I understand that the information submitted – mandatory 3-page narrative, and non-mandatory supporting documents – is going to be treated as confidential and will only be used for the purpose of the IWA Climate Smart Utilities Initiative.

☐ If recognised as an IWA Climate Smart Utility, I consent to develop a Climate Smart story to be published by IWA.

Annex 2 - Indicators to be considered to support the applicant's narrative (mandatory for Achiever category applicants)

The applicant should fill out as much information as they wish, with the objective to inform the Jury beyond the narrative provided and to foster knowledge sharing with other applying utilities.

Pillars	Indicators	Current Situation and Future Goals/Targets
1. ADAPTATION: Essential services are delivered while reducing the risk of failure in the face of climate change threats	1.1. Drinking water supply	
	1.1.1. Number of water sources delivering safe water	
	1.1.2. % share of each source in the water supply portfolio, including recycled water loops	
	1.1.3. Rating high/medium/low of the vulnerability of the source to climate change and why (to show understanding of vulnerability)	
	1.1.4. Litres/person/day of drinking water consumption per serviced population	
	1.1.5. % of water loss and NRW	
	1.2. Sanitation	
	1.2.1. % of the urban population with access to proper sanitation	
	1.2.2. % of sludge/wastewater managed in a way that protects the ecological health of water bodies	
	1.3. Frequency of system failures in the past 2 years, as defined by:	
	1.3.1. Number of unplanned service interruptions in the service area (due to pipe burst, quality compliance, or any other cause)	
	1.3.2. Amount of sewer overflow in m^3/year/serviced population (within the utility boundary)	

Pillars	Indicators	Current Situation and Future Goals/Targets
	1.3.3. Number of days/years with non-compliant WWTP discharge	
	1.3.4 Existence of a climate-related emergency preparedness and response plan (Yes/No) and frequency of exercises/drills in the past 2 years (number/year).	
2. MITIGATION: GHG emissions are reduced	2.1. Total GHG emissions in kg CO_2 eq/serviced population/year (overall or Scope 1 & Scope 2). Please specify Scope 3 emissions (if you have)	
	2.2. % reduction in GHS emissions (overall or Scope 1 & Scope 2) from the baseline year	
	2.3. What % of your total energy requirement is from renewable energy (detail on-site or purchased)?	
	2.4. Do you recover energy or resources within the utility? (Yes/No) Describe briefly.	
	2.5. % reduction of chemicals/energy used for water treatment/wastewater treatment from baseline year	
	2.6. Do you have process emissions monitoring and mitigation plans? (Yes/No) Describe the methodology adopted	
	2.7. Do you apply carbon/mitigation criteria as a routine part of design, procurement, construction and operational decision-making for both retrofit and greenfield investments (e.g., operational carbon and, where feasible, embedded/capital carbon)? (Yes/No) Describe briefly.	
3. LEADERSHIP: The applicant is a local, national and international leader	3.1. Is your utility committed to the climate agenda at the leadership level? (Yes/No) Describe briefly.	
	3.2. Does your utility play a leadership role in designing, planning and managing its water resources in active consultation with urban planners, communities and other stakeholders? (Yes/No) Describe briefly	

Pillars	Indicators	Current Situation and Future Goals/Targets
	3.3. Number of capacity-building programmes conducted for the utility staff and other citizens outreach programmes in the past 2 years. Include a list and topics	
	3.4. Number of case studies or publications or other communications shared in national or international communities (e.g., national associations, IWA, other) in the past 2 years. Include a list and topics	
	3.5. Does the utility prioritise DEI principles from its leadership and management to service provision? (Yes/No) Describe briefly	
	3.6. Does your utility champions innovation in technology, operations, emissions reductions, resilience, financial models, and insurance mechanisms? (Yes/No). Describe briefly	