IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition 2026

Water action – the path to resilience and prosperity

the international water association

Call for Content

GLASGOW
UK

4-8 OCTOBER
2026

Organised by

the international water association

www.worldwatercongress.org

Why should you submit your work to the IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition 2026

- **Advance new, inspiring solutions to the world's water challenges**
- **Validate and disseminate work by presenting it during a world-class Congress**
- **Learn and grow professionally through privileged access to the best content, cross-sector knowledge, and diverse experiences**
- **Expand your network and meet new professional partners by engaging with the leading water experts**

Glasgow – a global stage for leading water insights and expertise

The IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition is the global event for water and allied professionals covering the full water cycle.

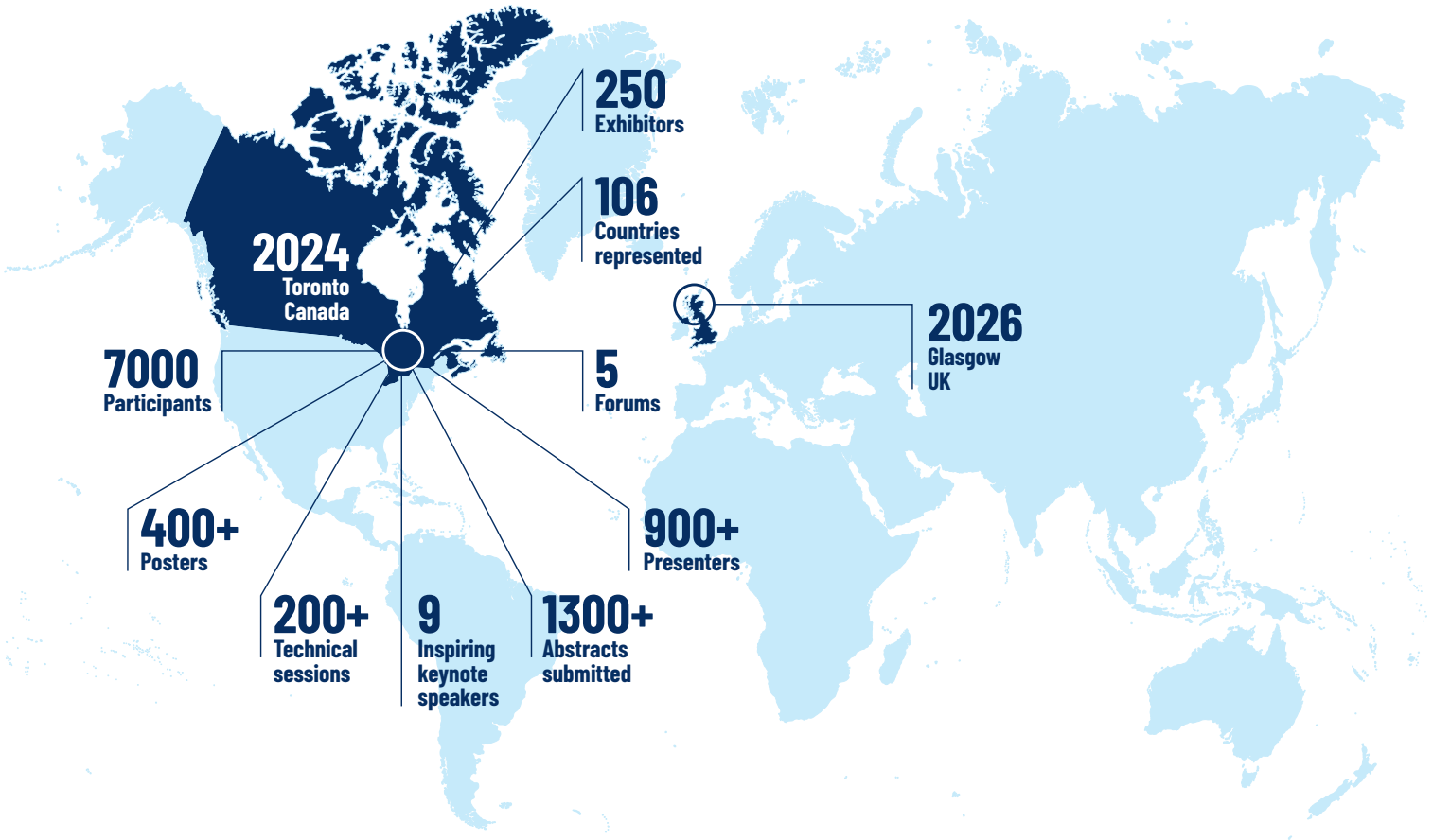
As the flagship biennial platform convened by the International Water Association, it brings together thought-leaders, decision makers, leading researchers and business representatives from within and outside of the water sector to exchange insights on solutions to shape our water future.

Following the huge success of the 2024 edition in Toronto, Canada, the 2026 edition – the 15th in the series – will be staged in Glasgow, UK, and is expected to draw some 10,000 participants from around the world.

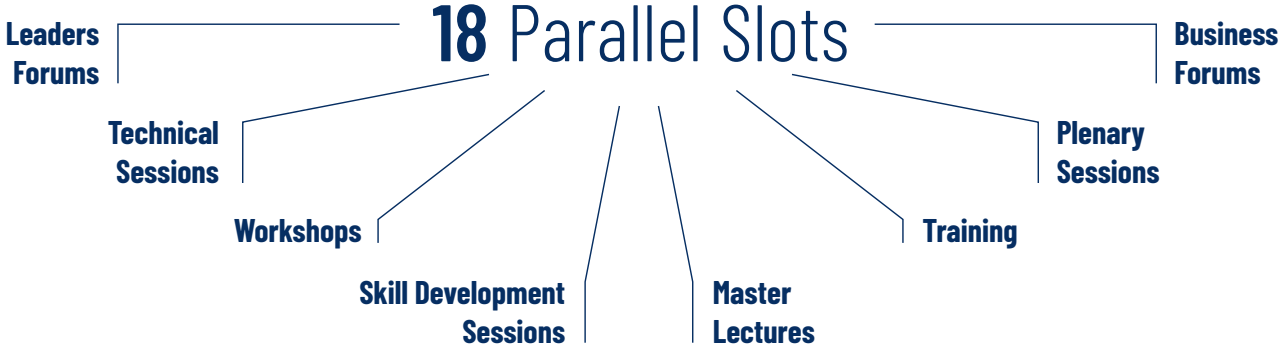
The IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition showcases state-of-the art knowledge and practice. An extensive programme of technical presentations, workshops and posters forms the core of the week-long event. Selected by an expert global Programme Committee and running across multiple parallel sessions, this delivers access to latest advances from right across the sector. Built around this, a carefully curated wider programme featuring keynote speakers, plenary panel discussions, technology showcases, dialogues on emerging issues, and leadership forums, as well as integrated trade exhibition, ensures the event delivers impact and value for all participants.

The event brings together a worldwide audience of utility and industry practitioners, experts, academics, government officials, NGO representatives, technology and service providers, consultants, media and others. Participation spans not only water professionals but engages industry, agriculture, architects and urban planners, hydrologists and soil and groundwater experts, social sciences, ICT-sector, the financial sector and others.

While a global event, each edition of the World Water Congress & Exhibition provides ready access to local and regional expertise. With comprehensive support and participation from across the UK water sector, the Glasgow edition will provide a unique opportunity to make contacts and exchange insights as the UK sector showcases itself to the world.



Water Action - the path to resilience and prosperity



#WordWaterCongress 2026 – a must-attend event

Attend the IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition 2026 and access:

- **Visionary thinkers and compelling speakers on key themes**
- **Special focus areas including urban water, climate smart utilities, circular economy, and digitalization**
- **High-level sessions and forums**
- **Career insights and opportunities for IWA Young Water Professionals and – connect with others sharing a passion for the water profession**
- **A global business platform**
- **An opportunity to enjoy the UK and beautiful Scotland**
- **Engagement of other key sectors**

www.worldwatercongress.org

Water – the foundation for resilience and prosperity

From the core basic needs of water supply and sanitation through to coordinated efforts at basin, national and regional level, action on water sustains human wellbeing, environmental health, and economic development. It underpins both resilience and prosperity. The 2026 edition of the World Water Congress & Exhibition will provide a showcase for sharing and advancing real-world innovation and options to deliver that action.

Use of nature-based solutions is one of the areas in which the water sector is rapidly evolving. These play a critical role in restoring ecosystems, adapting to climate impacts, protecting rivers and seas, and enhancing water security. Where nature recovery aligns with sustainable water and wastewater management and economic growth, we can achieve win/win outcomes for the environment and dependent communities through incentives, regulation, and innovative delivery mechanisms. To advance these options, it is essential to connect global perspectives with local relevance, fostering community engagement and individual actions.

Faced with escalating impacts of climate change, progress on ensuring long term resilience requires consideration of the whole water cycle, addressing causes rather than just consequences, adopting circular economy principles and working towards net zero. This needs to be supported by greater collaboration and more integrated solutions, clear water governance and uniting of efforts across catchments, basins and nations. The Congress will offer a platform for exchanges on holistic, interconnected approaches that can drive the preservation of natural ecosystems, build personal and community resilience, and deliver greater value and unlock growth.

At the same time, the need for advances on water supply and sanitation remains vital. Securing access to reliable, safe, and sufficient drinking water is fundamental to both individual and societal health. From concerns about chemical contaminants through to the benefits of high-quality water in leisure and sport, all aspects come together in the One Health concept which promotes collaboration, communication and co-ordination in humans, animals and the environment.

Such multiple connections across the wide scope of the World Water Congress & Exhibition highlight the central importance of water – an importance captured by the event theme of ***'Water action – the path to resilience and prosperity'***.

A comprehensive, agenda-setting programme

The IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition provides a unique platform for water professionals to present and share their recent findings and insights.

The core programme of technical sessions and workshops will span vital topics across the water cycle encompassing key concerns and solutions. The programme will be brought together under a number of broad thematic tracks.

Contributions are sought on global best practice, applied research, policy developments and solutions relating to challenges faced by water professionals. Presenting is a valuable opportunity to establish links with members of the community of world-leading water professionals. Contributions are sought on topics right across the water spectrum.

Overarching Congress technical programme themes:

- Water Utility Management
- Wastewater and Resource Recovery
- Drinking Water and Potable Reuse
- City-scale Planning and Operations
- Communities, Communication and Partnerships
- Water Resources and Sustainable Development

Topics on the technical programme set to include:

- Circular economy approaches, resource recovery and reuse
- PFAS and other water quality challenges
- Net-zero and carbon neutral urban water services
- Wastewater surveillance
- The role of digital technologies (AI, IoT)
- Antimicrobial resistance
- Nature-based solutions
- Decentralised water and sanitation treatment solutions
- Water quality monitoring and early warning systems
- Resilience planning across the water cycle

And much more…
see the following pages for the full list of topic categories.

What can authors submit?

OUTLINE PAPERS

- Oral presentation (15 min) or poster;
- Oral presentations from technical sessions (90 min);
- Authors invited to potential publication with IWA Publishing.

WORKSHOP PROPOSALS

- 90 min workshop proposal;
- Designed to foster cooperation;
- Meant to generate ideas/new solutions.

TRAINING PROPOSALS

- 90 min or back to back slots;
- Tailored to improve particular skills;
- Focused on specific topics or complementary skills.

Submit at www.worldwatercongress.org

Authors may submit an unlimited number of proposals. However, each presenting author can only be assigned up to two submissions during the Congress.

How is content selected?

All the content submitted to the IWA World Water Congress and Exhibition 2026 will be peer reviewed by a panel of water professionals. The Programme Committee will then, considering their expertise and the results of the peer review, form the technical programme of the Congress.

The evaluation of the content will consider, among others:

- The impact of the work in addressing pressing water challenges;
- The originality of the work, describing new solutions or approaches;
- The fit between the thematic tracks and the proposal;
- The stage of development of the proposal (e.g. specific results based on data and/or a strong rational).

IWA expects to receive more than 2000 submissions. From the pool of submissions the programme will include approximately 350 oral presentations, 600 poster presentations and 70 workshops and trainings.

Will papers be published?

The Congress delegates will have access to digital pre-print proceedings that include the content that forms the technical programme. Submissions selected for presentation will be invited to submit a full paper and will be considered by IWA Publishing for potential publication in one of IWA Publishing's journals.

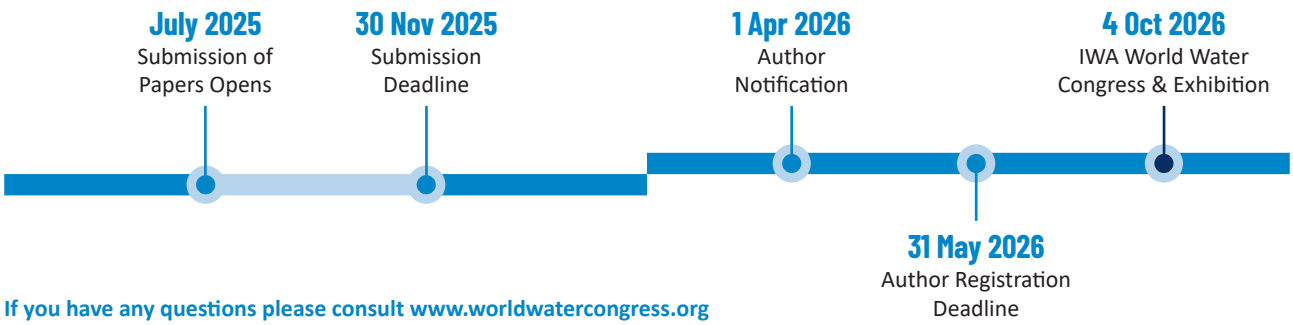
Author Resigtration

All authors (oral presenters, poster presenters, workshop organizers, training organizers) are requested to register to attend the Congress. Presenting authors are eligible for discounted registration rates.

Authors do not need to be members of IWA. However, IWA members have access to a series of benefits that include significant registration discounts.

Become a member at www.iwa-network.org/join

Key Dates



If you have any questions please consult www.worldwatercongress.org

Themes and the full list of topics

Listed below are all the topic categories under which content can be submitted. When uploading your proposal to the submission portal, you will be asked to classify your proposal. The categories set out below represent the full list of options.

Theme 1
WATER UTILITY MANAGEMENT

101 Asset management and optimization
102 Circular economy initiatives at utility level
103 Customer management and engagement
104 Economic and financial drivers to create beneficial community outcomes
105 Infrastructure rehabilitation
106 Integration of decentralised solutions in a centralised system
107 Interactions of utilities with local and regional government agencies
108 Management of extreme events (earthquakes, floods, bushfires, major accidents and attacks etc).
109 Net-zero and carbon neutral urban water services
110 Outbreak management - learning from crisies
111 Public-private sector water utility cooperation
112 Sewer overflow management at utility level
113 The digital water utility (data management)
114 Trade waste (industry inflows) management
115 Utility efficiency and benchmarking
116 Utility responses and adaptation to climate change impacts
117 Utility-scale Water savings and reuse initiative
118 Utility-wide performance management and optimization approaches
119 Utility-wide plant performance and optimization approaches Water savings and reuse
120 Utility-wide transformation and change management
121 Water & waste water plant performances and optimization approaches

Theme 2
WASTEWATER & RESOURCE RECOVERY

201 Activated sludge processes
202 Advanced oxidation processes
203 Anaerobic processes: AD & biogas, biohydrogen, and chain elongation for renewable feedstocks
204 Artificial intelligence in wastewater treatment
205 Bio-electrochemical processes
206 Biofilm and granular sludge processes
207 Biosolids management & reuse
208 Circular Economy approaches: Industry recycling and cross-industry synergies
209 Decentralised treatment and nonsewered sanitation
210 Energy efficiency and recovery
211 Fate, effects and removal of emerging contaminants (micropollutants, nanomaterials, pharmaceuticals, microplastics, …)
212 Industry recycling and cross-industry synergies
213 Instrumentation, control & automation
214 Large wastewater treatment plants
215 Membrane applications in wastewater management
216 Membrane bioreactors
217 Microalgae Bacterial systems
218 Microbial ecology (communities, meta-omics)
219 Modelling treatment processes and integrated systems
220 Nanomaterials and nanotechnology
221 Nature based solutions for wastewater treatment
222 Nutrient removal
223 Other physico-chemical treatment techniques
224 PFAS fate and treatment in biosolids
225 Recovery of nutrients and chemicals
226 Reduction of pathogens and antimicrobial resistance via wastewater treatment
227 Sewer corrosion and odour management
228 Sewer infiltration/exfiltration
229 Thermal Technologies (Pyrolysis, incineration, gasification, HTL)
230 Trade waste (industry inflows) management
231 Treatment and recovery of industrial wastewater
232 Wastewater epidemiology (pathogens and antimicrobial resistance)
233 Wastewater epidemiology of chemical indicators of public health (illicit drugs, etc.)
234 Water reclamation for non-potable reuse

Theme 3
DRINKING WATER & POTABLE REUSE

301 Alternative drinking water production (rainwater harvesting, decentralised production, etc)
302 Biofilms and pathogen management in water distribution systems
303 Circular Economy approaches
304 Communication with stakeholders
305 Data management and data security
306 Decentralized solutions and production based on multiple water sources (rainwater, stormwater etc.)
307 Disaster management and water safety plans
308 Disinfection techniques and byproducts management
309 Distribution piping (house/building plumbing, metal and plastic leaching etc.)
310 Emerging microbial contaminants/ pathogens and antibiotic resistant bacteria/genes
311 Groundwater-based drinking water supply
312 Intermittent supply system challenges and optimisation
313 IoT initiatives, data and hardware integration
314 Microbial and chemical risk assessment including toxicology
315 Microbiology of Drinking Water Treatment and Distribution
316 Microplastics in Drinking Water: Understanding the Threat and Exploring Regulatory Measures
317 Modelling treatment processes and integrated systems
318 Monitoring and Control
319 Non-revenue water and leakage management
320 Pathogen and Indicator Detection and Management
321 Potable reuse technologies
322 Removal of emerging chemical contaminants/PFAS
323 Taste and odour management/removal
324 Unit operations (coagulation, (bio) filtration, membrane processes, activated carbon, ozonation…)
325 Water demand management and use efficiency
326 Water quality outbreak management – learning from crisis
327 Water quality standards, regulations and economics

Themes and the full list of topics

Theme 4

CITY-SCALE PLANNING & OPERATIONS

401 Circular economy and resource recovery in urban water systems
402 City-scale challenges and solutions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
403 Data management, accessibility and security
404 From data to information to decision - integration across all city services
405 Impact of urban (re)development and densification on water management
406 Impacts and mitigation of climate change.
407 Integration of water management and urban planning
408 Modelling and other decision-support tools for urban water planning
409 Modelling/optimisation of water supply and sewer networks and processes
410 Nature-based solutions, sponge cities and blue/green infrastructure
411 Quantification of economic, human and environmental benefits of water wise solutions
412 Rainwater, stormwater and urban drainage
413 Rehabilitation and retrofitting of water and wastewater infrastructure
414 Resilience planning and design
415 Sensors, instrumentation, IoT and Digital Twins in urban systems
416 Transitioning to and implementation of sustainable and water wise cities
417 Urban scale groundwater management
418 Use of weather radar, numerical weather prediction, drones and remote sensing.
419 Water-energy interactions in the urban water cycle (eg centralised water heating/cooling etc.)
420 Water-sensitive urban design and hybrid centralised/ decentralised solutions

Theme 5

COMMUNITIES, COMMUNICATION & PARTNERSHIPS

501 Collaboration of local and regional government agencies with water service providers
502 Community behaviour change – methods, communication and incentives
503 Community, customer and stakeholder engagement and communication at local level
504 Community-based water supply and management
505 Community-focused decision making
506 Cost of water, pricing and incentives
507 Cross-institutional coordination and collaboration
508 Customer management and engagement using digital tools
509 Decolonization and just transition
510 Enabling health, well-being and liveability outcomes
511 Entrepreneurship and innovation partnerships
512 Environmental impact assessment based planning
513 Impacts of digital transformation on society, citizens, and businesses
514 Incentives and drivers to enable change
515 Indigenous-led water stewardship and knowledge systems
516 Integration/management of databases across urban and water system
517 Life with water, art and architecture
518 Pandemic / crisis management in developing countries
519 Partnerships and cooperation in and beyond the water sector
520 Regulation coordination across agencies (economic, environmental, services etc.)
521 Resilience planning across the water cycle and the community.
522 Small-scale/decentralised sanitation solutions at community level
523 System thinking and planning
524 Valuing water: investment and impact OR Water investment and multi-dimensional value ssessment
525 Water management in industries

Theme 6

WATER RESOURCES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

601 Catchment management and natural capital approaches on different scales
602 Desalination and Alternative Water Sources
603 Diffuse pollution – sources and mitigation
604 Governance, management and institutional arrangements.
605 Groundwater mapping, monitoring and modelling
606 Life cycle assessment, water efficiency, water footprint, virtual water, etc.
607 Planetary boundaries and science of sustainability
608 Pollution from point sources – agriculture, industry, urban
609 Protection of groundwater quality and quantity
610 Protection of surface water quality and quantity
611 Soil contamination and groundwater remediation
612 Source-to-sea pollution management
613 Surface water monitoring systems and models
614 Water resource management and adaptation to climate change impacts
615 Water resource management towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
616 Water rights, trading and partnerships
617 Water stress, droughts and floods, including impact of climate change
618 Water-related ecosystems and environmental flows;

701 Others (soft skills, etc..) falls under workshop submissions

Programme Committee

- **Amy Pruden**
  Virginia Tech, USA (Co-Chair)
- **Zhiguo Yuan**
  City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong (Co-Chair)
- **Blanca Antizar**
  Isle Utilities, UK
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