TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

11th WORLD WATER FORUM THEMATIC PROCESS WORKING GROUP

11th World Water Forum Thematic Process working groups comprise the Thematic Process Commission (TPC), Theme Coordination Groups, Topic Coordination Groups, and Session Coordination Groups.

Each coordination group will collaborate at every step within and among the thematic working groups, culminating in tangible outcomes and results during and after the Forum week.

To ensure the interconnectivity of the entire forum processes, the Thematic Process working group is to collaborate with the groups of the Regional Process to embrace local perspectives and cases on common topics and Political segments to link between thematic outcomes and political commitment as well as policy development.

WORKING GROUPS

Thematic Process Commission (TPC) (1 unit)

A guiding and preliminary decision-making group of the Thematic Process before the Forum ISC Bureau's confirmation on major issues.
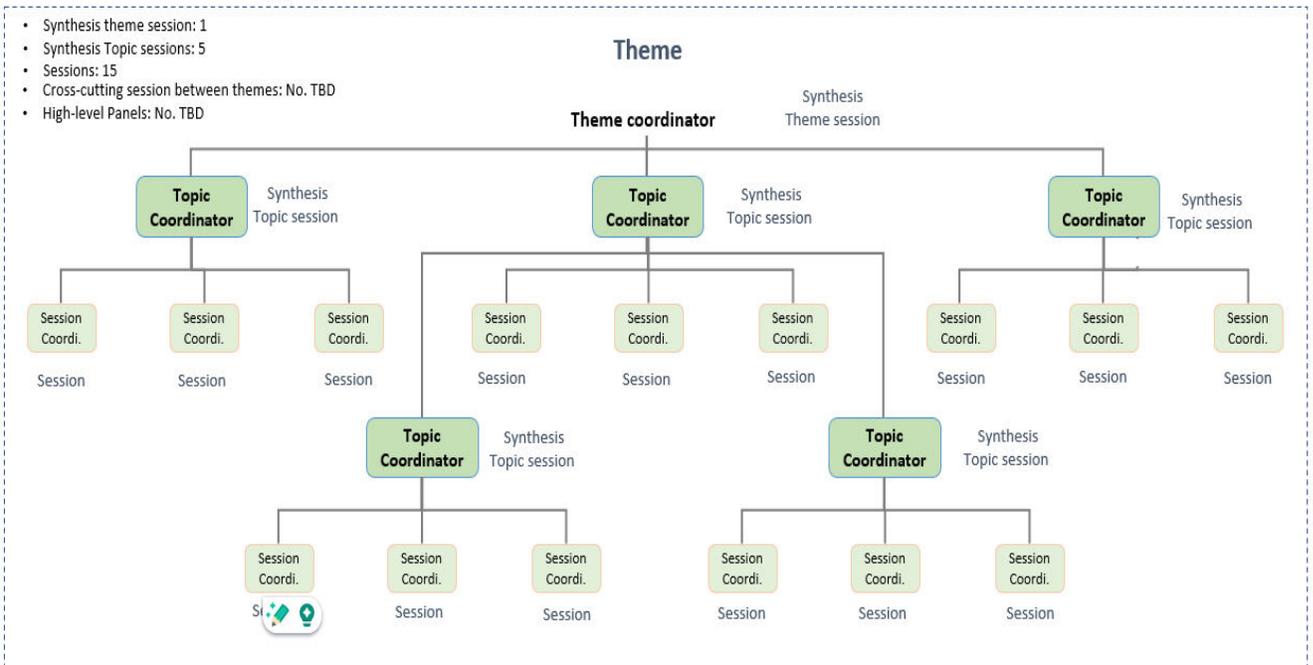
- **Composition (14)**
  - Co-chair: (WWC) **Patrick Lavarde**, Former General Inspector of the Environment and Sustainable Development (France)
  - Co-chair: (KSA) **Arif Alkalali**, Supervisor of Water Resources Directorate, Ministry of Environment, Water, and Agriculture
  - Theme Coordinators (2 for a theme:1 international and 1 KSA)

  Supported by the Thematic team of the WWC and the 11th Forum national secretariat

- **Roles and Responsibilities**
  - Strategic Direction and Roadmap
    - ✓ Design and oversee the overall roadmap of the Thematic Process.
    - ✓ Provide strategic guidance on priorities and directions before submission to the Forum ISC Bureau for formal endorsement.
  - Coordination with Other Processes
    - ✓ Coordinate with the Regional Process to highlight local cases and perspectives on common challenges.
    - ✓ Ensure linkages with the Political Process, translating thematic outcomes into political commitments and policy relevance.

- Structure and Coordination
  - ✓ Approve and guide the general thematic framework and the proposed sessions of the Thematic Process
  - ✓ Appoint and compose the Topic Coordination Group from expressions of interest received.
  - ✓ Supervise Theme, Topic, and Session Coordination Groups, ensuring coherence across levels.
- Review and Approval
  - ✓ Examine and validate detailed plans, concept notes, and proposals prepared by Theme, Topic, and Session Coordination Groups.
  - ✓ Approve synthesis outputs at each level (Theme Synthesis, Topic Synthesis, Session Proposals).
- Oversight and Quality Assurance
  - ✓ Supervise the planning and delivery of all Thematic sessions.
  - ✓ Monitor the quality, consistency, and interconnectivity of session content.
  - ✓ Ensure thematic outputs contribute meaningfully to the Forum's collective results.
- Outcomes and Reporting
  - ✓ Gather, review and consolidate the outcomes of the Thematic Process Sessions.
  - ✓ Summarize and finalize the results of the Thematic Process for presentation during and after the Forum week.

Each of the six themes has a working group structure as below.

Theme Coordination Group (ThCG: 6 units)

Coordinating organizations for each theme: Theme coordinators and the Topic coordinators

Two theme coordinators for each theme (1 international and 1 KSA) will be appointed by the ISC Bureau on the proposal of the TPC co-chairs

- **Roles and Responsibilities**

- Coordination and Leadership
  - ✓ Lead and animate the Topic Coordinators under each theme, in line with TPC guidance and decisions.
- Concept Development
  - ✓ Prepare the theme Concept Note, incorporating the associated Topics concept notes.
- Session Planning and Oversight
  - ✓ Plan and organize the Theme Synthesis Session.
  - ✓ Review and provide guidance for Topic Synthesis Sessions and Topic Sessions to ensure consistency and quality.
- Strategic Contribution
  - ✓ Identify and advise on potential high-level dialogues relevant to the theme.
  - ✓ Participate in inter-process meetings to ensure alignment with the Regional and Political Processes and contribute substantive input to Political Segments.
- Outcomes and Reporting
  - ✓ Consolidate and summarize the results of all theme activities.
  - ✓ Prepare the theme Outcomes Report for integration into the overall Thematic Process results after the Forum.

➔ Those interested in being Theme Coordinator (international) are invited to submit a completed template in response to the **Call for Expression of Interest for the Thematic Process Working Group.**

Topic Coordination Group (ToCG: 30 units)

Coordinating organizations for each Topic: the Coordinator and the members

A topic coordinator appointed by the TPC among the ToCG upon the call for the working group process

- **Roles and Responsibilities**

- Prepare Topic Concept Notes and define specific Issues for the Sessions under each Topic.
- Plan and organize a Topic Synthesis Session, incorporating outcomes from all Sessions under the respective Topic.
- Guide and collaborate with Session Coordinators to ensure sessions are effective, coherent, and outcome-oriented.
- Consolidate and prepare a Topic Results Summary after the Forum, integrating the outcomes of all sessions under the respective Topic.

➔ Those interested in joining the Topic Coordination Group are invited to submit a completed template in response to the **Call for Expression of Interest for the Thematic Process Working Group.**

Session Coordination Group (SCG: 90 units)

Coordinating organizations for each session: Coordinator and members

A session coordinator appointed by the TPC upon call for session coordination process

- **Roles and Responsibilities**

- Develop the identified **Issue** and prepare a detailed proposal for a session under its corresponding Topic, as defined by the Topic Coordinators.
- Plan and organize the **Session**, ensuring effective design, participation, and delivery.
- Prepare and submit the **Session Outcomes** to feed into the Topic Synthesis Session.
- Draft a **Session Results Summary** after the Forum, consolidating key discussions, findings, and recommendations.

➔ Those interested in becoming a session coordinator are invited to submit a completed template in response to the **Call for Interest for Session Coordination**. This call will be opened once the list of Issues to be addressed by the sessions is finalized, after the 2nd Stakeholders Consultation Meeting (April 2026).

CROSS-CUTTING PRINCIPLE

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From Dialogue to Action: Ensuring Action-Based Outcomes

To reinforce the 11th World Water Forum's role as a catalyst for solutions, the Thematic Process Working Groups shall prioritize **action-oriented deliverables** that go beyond knowledge sharing. All coordination levels (Theme, Topic, and Session) will embed the following principles into their work:

1. Action-Oriented Synthesis
- Each Synthesis Session (Theme/Topic) must conclude with clear, actionable recommendations and concrete proposals, not only descriptive summaries.
- Recommendations and proposals should be specific, time-bound, and linked to potential implementers (e.g., governments, financing institutions, utilities, civil society organizations).

2. Pathways for Uptake
- Outcomes must be actively linked to other Forum processes:
  - **Political Process**: providing feeds into different declarations, commitments, and policy frameworks.
  - **Regional Process**: ensure resonance with local roadmaps and implementation contexts.
- Coordinators should facilitate follow-up dialogues to translate outcomes into policy, investment, or programmatic action.

3. Deliverables Beyond the Forum
- In addition to session reports, it is recommended to prepare practical deliverable such as:
  - Policy briefs or guidance notes
  - Roadmaps or action plans with a proposed taskforce for implementation
  - Investment pipelines or project concept notes

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o Knowledge tools (case libraries, toolkits, digital platforms)

4. Commitments and Partnerships
- Sessions are recommended to be designed to enable commitments (institutional, financial, or partnership-based).
- Coordinators are encouraged to seek initiatives or advocacies that also could also be showcased during and after the Forum.

5. Follow-up and Reporting
- Each coordinator could integrate mechanisms for follow-up (e.g., online knowledge sharing).
- Results will be consolidated into the Forum's Outcome Report, ensuring continuity in the post-Forum agenda.

TIMELINE

Date	Thematic Process
July 2025	• Proposed first Draft of Thematic Framework
August 2025	• Advance discussion and finalize the Framework
Sep 2025	• Calls for Expression of Interest of the Theme Coordinators and Topic Group Members (Thematic Process TOR of Actors, Template)
Oct 2025	• Appointment of the Theme and Topic Coordinators: Composition of Theme (ThCG) and Topic Coordination Group (ToCG)
Jan 2026	• Theme and Topic Draft Concept Notes Submission • Draft list of session issues Submission by ToCG
April 2026	• **2nd Stakeholders Consultation Meeting** • Call for Expression of Interest of the Session Coordination Group
June 2026	• Final versions of the Theme and Topic Concept Notes Submission • Session Coordinators Selected
October 2026	• Sessions Proposal Submission
February 2027	• Theme and Topic Synthesis Sessions Development
~ March 2027	• Continuous development of all sessions and deliverables • **11th World Water Forum**
June 2027	• Summary of Theme, Topic, Session Submission • Delivery Follow-ups

THEMATIC PROCESS FRAMEWORK
11th WORLD WATER FORUM

1.WATER SECURITY

- **1A. Groundwater and Surface Water:** Determining availability and promoting equitable, cross-sectoral and transboundary management in rural and urban areas.
- **1B. Water-Related Disasters:** Mitigating and adapting to floods, droughts, and desertification through planning, early-warning, and nature-based solutions and mitigation infrastructure, including dams and water storage infrastructure.
- **1C. Integrated Water Resource Management**: Expanding IWRM using basin-level and source-to-sea approaches under climate and demographic pressures.
- **1D. Closing the Loop in Water Resources Management:** Enhancing demand efficiency, promoting reuse and circular economic principles, strengthening resilience by integrating non-conventional resources
- **1E. Securing Water for Food Security:** Advancing sustainable agriculture through efficient irrigation, equitable allocation, alternative water, and climate-resilient transformation.

2.WATER FINANCE

- **2A. Applying Innovative Water Financing Mechanisms**: Scaling emerging tools like fintech, green/blue bonds, adaptive tariffs, and ecosystem payments beyond blended finance.
- **2B. Private and Public Sectors Engagement:** Opening New Corridors: Aligning and mobilizing PPPs, corporate and impact investments, and smart subsidies under strong public frameworks.
- **2C. Funding for Water Resilience and Climate Adaptation**: Prioritizing investment in WASH, climate-smart f, and scalable, nature-based adaptation solutions.
- **2D. Funding and Loans for Multiscale Projects**: Expanding access to finance for small and mid-scale projects and for smaller entities or stakeholders using microfinance, decentralized funds, and inclusive models.
- **2E. Enabling Conditions for Scaling up Strategic and Inclusive Water Financing**: Strengthening legal frameworks, institutional capacity, and risk management to unlock multi-scale finance.

3.WATER FOR HUMANS AND NATURE

- **3A. Enhancing Access to Safe Drinking Water Services for All:** Guaranteeing safe drinking water as a human right through resilient service delivery, inclusive governance, cost-effectiveness, and nature-based solution s.
- **3B. Developing Access to Sanitation Services and Improve Wastewater Collection and Treatment:** Ensuring full sanitation access and manage the entire wastewater chain from containment to reuse and safe discharge.

- **3C. Protecting and Restoring Water Ecosystems and Aquatic Biodiversity:** Restoring freshwater and coastal ecosystems through nature-based solutions, watershed protection, and pollution control.
- **3D. Improving Water Quality in a One Health and Multi-Sectoral Approach:** Enhancing water quality by addressing pollution across sectors through a One Health lens linking people, animals, and nature.
- **3E. Water-Energy-Food-Health-Ecosystems-Education Interlinkages:** Positioning water as the core connector across sectors through a new horizontal, cross-cutting approach.

4.WATER GOVERNANCE AND DIPLOMACY

- **4A. Adopting Policy, Regulatory Frameworks, and Institutional Mechanisms:** Aligning national and local governance to catalyze multi-level partnerships and deliver on SDG water targets.
- **4B. Strengthening Political Will and Coordination:** Bridging the gap between global goals and local implementation through coordinated, accountable action and resource alignment.
- **4C. New Instruments for Water Sustainability Policy Consensus:** Empowering actors from local to transboundary levels to co-develop water policies via inclusive, multi-scale cooperation.
- **4D. Towards Holistic Water Advocacy and Public Awareness Programs:** Elevating water through education, civic engagement, stakeholder dialogues, and broad awareness platforms.
- **4E. Engaging Unheard and Vulnerable Voices**: Promoting human rights-based governance by including women, youth, Indigenous people, and cross-sectoral actors in decision-making; innovating new water diplomacy solutions to provide water and sanitation to communities in humanitarian crisis and conflict zones

5.INNOVATION FOR WATER MANAGEMENT

- 5A. Hydro informatics **and AI Tools for Water Management:** Leveraging AI, Earth observation, and digital tools with strong governance, cybersecurity, and tech-sector collaboration.
- **5B. Deploying Cutting-Edge Water Technology:** Moving from pilots to full-scale adoption of innovative technologies, environmentally sound and socially equitable over the long term, including reuse, desalination, and smart sensors.
- **5C**. **Data and Overcoming the Lasting Challenge:** Modernizing water information systems with real-time data, digital twins, and decision-support innovations.
- **5D. Engaging Citizen Science and Community-Based Knowledge:** Combining traditional knowledge and citizen-led innovation with technologies tailored through local participation.
- **5**E. **Knowledge Sharing**: Advancing open data, peer learning, capacity building, and lifelong training opportunities.

6.VALUE OF WATER

- **6A. Valuing water for sustainable economic growth:** Recognizing and strengthening the full value of water for sustainable development and climate resilience.
- **6B. Advancing efficiency in water management in different sectors:** Promoting efficient and circular water use across sectors, notably through smart irrigation, reuse, and urban planning.
- **6C. Pricing water for sustainable management:** Implementing water pricing and policies that reflect water's full value, including environmental and social costs.
- **6D. Valuing and footprinting water to drive efficient water policies:** Monitoring water footprints of different sectors and virtual flows in trade to reduce impacts and promote responsible consumption.
- **6E. Water resources as a national natural capital: towards a paradigm shift:** Ensuring water allocation guided by efficiency and fairness, maximizing benefits while ensuring access for all.