



**Closing of the Kick-Off and 1st International Stakeholders meeting of the
11th World Water Forum.**

Speech of Loic Fauchon, President of the World Water Council.

15 April 2025, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Excellency Minister Abdulrahman Abdulmohsen Al Fadley,

Excellency, dear Minister Abdulaziz AlShaibani

Excellencies, dear colleagues, dear friends of water,

As we conclude this important Kick-Off Meeting, I would like to express my warm gratitude to each of you for your participation.

Dear colleagues, thank you for your continued interest and loyalty. Thank you for being with us once again, whether traveling here or from your respective countries. Your presence embodies the spirit of the World Water Forums.

Political, regional, and thematic processes come alive through your enriched experiences, your vision, and your commitments. And on our side, we renew our full trust in you and your vital role within this collective journey.

This is the true power of the Council: an open and collective intelligence, built by dedicated and faithful actors from all regions and sectors, united by a shared ambition for water.

My second word of appreciation goes, of course, to our co-host — the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Thank you for your warm welcome and generous hospitality.

We deeply value your commitment to making this journey a success, and your willingness not only to meet expectations, but to set new standards, following up the Bali Forum and building on its outcomes and commitments.



We are confident that Saudi Arabia's unique challenges and its remarkable capacity to respond will have a profound influence in shaping the narrative of the Forum, driving us all to seek more innovative, actionable, and resilient solutions to the water challenges.

As we all know, 2025 and the years ahead will be decisive for the global water agenda. With major international milestones on the horizon, including the 2026 UN Water Conference and the 2030 Agenda.

These moments bring great challenges but also leave room for opportunities and innovation. We must work to identify the right challenges, engage with the right players, and open new spaces for dialogue, keeping an open mind and a spirit of collaboration. And we are very much encouraged to see that this spirit has already come to life throughout the Kick-Off Meeting.

Moving from ideas to action requires reaching the places where decisions are made. The World Water Council has long distinguished itself by consistently affirming that water is politics. Whether through ministers, parliamentarians, local governments, or basin authorities, we must build strong and lasting bridges between knowledge and decision-making. It is only through this connection that informed, impactful, and sustainable water solutions can be found.

Dear colleagues, rest assured that we are committed to pushing the political process forward, to ensure that the outcomes of our collective work translate into concrete commitments and implementation on the ground.

As we navigate through the heavy Global Water Agenda, cooperation and communication will be a key factor for progress.

The more people there are speaking together, the louder our collective voice will become. However, without a harmonious message our efforts risk becoming noise. So, dear colleagues, let us ensure that our coherent voices resonate clearly into a powerful call for change.

As a final word, I would like to remind us why we are doing this. Why are we water warriors?



The answer is simple : because the real challenges are not only technical or political; they are human. They concern the dignity of communities without access to safe water, the resilience of ecosystems under pressure, and the future of generations who depend on the decisions we make today.

So, thank you very much to all of you, for your commitment and participation. I look forward to seeing you at our next gathering. I trust that each of you will help maintain momentum and continue these meaningful efforts. Let's work together to turn our shared goals into reality.