

27TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE IHP INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL (PARIS, 1-5 JUNE 2026)

Draft Brief for Ghana delegation



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FOREWORD

In preparing the briefs for the Ghana Delegation to the 27th Session of the Intergovernmental Council of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP), the summaries of the available agenda items have been carefully reviewed, in line with established practice. The key elements of each agenda item, together with their corresponding reports, have been compiled to provide a clear and accessible reference for the delegation.

It is to be noted that this Brief contains suggested interventions on prioritized agenda items of strategic importance to Ghana. It should further be noted that the content of the interventions are intended as guiding inputs and are not necessarily statements to be delivered verbatim during the session unless otherwise agreed prior to the meeting.

It is our hope that this document will serve as a useful resource in supporting the Ghana Delegation to effectively engage in discussions, contribute meaningfully to deliberations, and respond to emerging issues as the Session progresses.



MAWULI LUMOR (Ph.D)
CHAIR – GHANA COMMITTEE FOR UNESCO IHP

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme

27th Ordinary session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council

(Paris, 1-5 June 2026)

1. Opening of the session

- 1.1. Address by the Director-General of UNESCO or his representative
- 1.2. Address by the Chairperson of the Intergovernmental Council of IHP

2. Adoption of the agenda and determination of the Council's method of work

3. Institutional developments at UNESCO: IHP within UNESCO

- 3.1. Developments in the Natural Sciences Sector and the Division of Water Sciences following the 221st; 222nd and 224th sessions of the Executive Board, and the UNESCO's 43rd General Conference and the Programme and Budget 43 C/5

- 3.2. Review of the Rules of Procedure

- 3.3. Extrabudgetary activities within the Division of Water Sciences

- 3.4. Report of the Finance Committee

- 3.5. Report of the Communication and Outreach Committee

4. Report on the implementation of the resolutions and decisions adopted at the 26th session of the Intergovernmental Council of the IHP

5. Programme implementation

- 5.1. Implementation of the ninth phase of IHP

- 5.2. Regional perspectives on IHP

- 5.3. Report on the IHP Flagship Initiatives and their alignment to the new framework

- 5.4. Report on the 30th Anniversary of Ecohydrology in IHP - Challenges and perspectives and new initiatives

- 5.5. Report of the task force on the ECOMED Academy

- 5.6. Report of the task force on the Alliance of Mega Cities and Water

- 5.7. Report of the task force on the pre-feasibility study for a UNESCO Water Sciences Report

- 5.8. Report on the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation (2025) and the UN Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences (2025-2034)

- 5.9. Cooperation with other UNESCO programmes

6. Report on the Celebration of the 50th anniversary of IHP and 60 years of Water Sciences at UNESCO

7. Midterm evaluation of IHP-IX

8. Roadmap for IHP transformation and strategic reinforcement

9. Cooperation with the UN System

- 9.1. Involvement within UN-Water including Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6 monitoring and monitoring of SDG 6.5.2, the Capacity development Initiative (CDI) and experts' groups

- 9.2. Involvement in UN system wide strategy on water and sanitation and UN global water processes including UN 2026 Water conference

- 9.3. Cooperation with other UN agencies

10. UNESCO's Water Family

- 10.1. Status and operation of the UNESCO Water Family
- 10.2. Specific actions for the management of the Category 2 Centres' network
- 10.3. UNESCO World Water Assessment Programme including IHP contribution to World Water Development Reports

11. Relations with intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations

- 11.1. Cooperation with Intergovernmental Organizations, Scientific Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations
- 11.2. IHP's role in the 11th World Water Forum
- 11.3. IHP's role in other key international events and agendas (Dushanbe Water Conference 2025 and 2026, World Water Week 2025, World Water Congress, UNFCCC COP 29 and 30)

12. Other matters

13. Adoption of the report

14. Closure of the session

Item 3.1 – Developments in the Natural Sciences Sector and the Division of Water Sciences following the 221st; 222nd and 224th sessions of the Executive Board, and the UNESCO’s 43rd General Conference and the Programme and Budget 43 C/5

Summary

The document outlines major developments affecting UNESCO’s water programmes following the 221st, 222nd, and 224th sessions of the Executive Board, as well as decisions adopted at UNESCO’s 43rd General Conference and under the 43 C/5 Programme and Budget. Central to these discussions was the strengthening of water security under the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP), with emphasis on integrated water resources management, hydrological monitoring, disaster risk reduction, science-based policymaking, and resilience to climate-induced risks. The Executive Board also highlighted the need to support vulnerable regions, particularly Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and endorsed the proclamation of 25 April as the International Day for SIDS.

The Executive Board and General Conference further focused on strengthening UNESCO’s network of water-related Category 2 Centres. New centres in Austria and Australia were approved, while several existing centres in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America had their agreements renewed or extended. In addition, UNESCO proclaimed 13 September as the International Day of Caves and Karst in recognition of the ecological, hydrological, and scientific importance of caves and karst systems for sustainable development and water provision. The Board also called for stronger coordination between culture and nature across UNESCO’s programmes, including the IHP.

The 43rd General Conference elected new members to the Intergovernmental Council of the IHP and authorized the implementation of Major Programme II – Natural Sciences for the period 2026–2029 in support of the Sustainable Development Goals. The approved 43 C/5 Programme and Budget established water as a dedicated output area under UNESCO’s Natural Sciences programme, to be implemented through the IHP and the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP). The programme prioritizes water security, sustainable water management, climate resilience, hydrological monitoring, transboundary water cooperation, and capacity-building for Member States, especially vulnerable countries and SIDS.

At its 224th session, the Executive Board also addressed financial and institutional matters affecting UNESCO’s water programmes. While maintaining support for water-related outputs, the Board approved a consolidated Sciences Sector combining natural sciences with social and human sciences, aimed at strengthening interdisciplinary approaches. Budgetary constraints and reduced assessed contributions resulted in restructuring within the Division of Water Sciences, reducing its sections from three to two. The new structure seeks to improve efficiency and thematic coordination, with one section focusing on

hydrological systems and climate change adaptation, and the other on groundwater, water governance, cooperation, and education under the priorities of IHP-IX.

Intervention

Mr. Chairperson,

Ghana congratulates you for your appointment and assure you of our utmost support to ensuring a successful meeting.

Ghana thanks the Secretariat for the comprehensive report on developments within the Natural Sciences Sector and the Division of Water Sciences following the recent sessions of the Executive Board and the 43rd General Conference.

We warmly congratulate the newly elected members of the Intergovernmental Council and assures them of our cooperation in advancing the objectives of the IHP-IX Strategy.

Ghana welcome UNESCO's continued focus on water security, integrated water resources management, hydrological monitoring, disaster risk reduction, and resilience to climate-induced risks, which remain critical priorities for Africa and other vulnerable regions.

The Ghana delegation also welcomes the continued strengthening and renewal of UNESCO Category 2 Centres and encourages greater regional balance and stronger support for African Member States through enhanced scientific cooperation, technology transfer, and capacity-building initiatives.

While acknowledging efforts under the approved 43 C/5 Programme and Budget, we take note of concerns regarding declining assessed contributions and their possible impact on programme delivery. We therefore encourage sustained support and adequate financing for UNESCO's water programmes and the effective implementation of IHP-IX.

Chairperson, As Ghana's current term on the Intergovernmental Council comes to an end next year, we express appreciation to Member States for the sustained trust and cooperation extended to Ghana.

In this regard, we wish to announce our intention to seek re-election to the Intergovernmental Council at the next General Conference. We remain committed to contributing actively to UNESCO's work in water sciences, international scientific cooperation, and sustainable water governance.

We respectfully seek the support of Member States for Ghana's candidature and reaffirm our readiness to continue working constructively with all delegations toward achieving global water security and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Thank you.

Item 3.2 - Review of the Rules of Procedure

Summary

Item 3.3 - Extrabudgetary activities within the Division of Water Sciences

Summary

The report outlines UNESCO's extensive extrabudgetary activities in water sciences between 2024 and 2026, covering 45 projects valued at approximately USD 62.2 million, of which 30 projects worth about USD 56.3 million remain ongoing. The portfolio supports water security, climate resilience, hydrological monitoring, groundwater management, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable water governance, with annual implementation estimated at about USD 11 million.

Most projects were implemented through UNESCO Field Offices, which managed about 70 per cent of the portfolio, demonstrating the importance of field-based delivery. While the portfolio included many small-scale interventions, funding was concentrated in a limited number of large projects with broad regional impact.

Major funding partners included the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Adaptation Fund, and bilateral donors such as Japan, Republic of Korea, France, Germany, and Spain. UNESCO also continued efforts to diversify support through private sector and climate financing partnerships.

The projects addressed a wide range of regional water challenges, including flood resilience, climate adaptation, groundwater cooperation, and transboundary water management across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Small Island Developing States. The report specifically highlighted the Japan-supported project on strengthening resilience to water-related disasters in Ghana and acknowledged the continued support of the Government of Italy to the World Water Assessment Programme.

Intervention

Ghana thanks the Secretariat for the comprehensive report on extrabudgetary activities within the Division of Water Sciences and commends UNESCO for mobilizing the needed

resources in support of global water security, climate resilience, and sustainable water management.

The Ghana delegation particularly wishes to express its sincere appreciation to the Government and people of Japan for their longstanding support to UNESCO's water programmes and for the valuable assistance provided to Ghana through the project entitled "*Strengthening Resilience on Water-related Disaster in Ghana.*" This important initiative demonstrates Japan's continued commitment to international cooperation, disaster risk reduction, and climate resilience in vulnerable countries.

Ghana recognizes the significance of this project in strengthening our nation's capacity to address water-related disasters, particularly floods and other hydro-climatic risks that increasingly threaten communities, infrastructure, livelihoods, and sustainable development. The project will contribute to improving hydrological monitoring, early warning systems, disaster preparedness, and community resilience, while supporting science-based decision-making and integrated water resources management in Ghana.

Ghana further welcomes UNESCO's broader efforts to expand partnerships with bilateral donors, multilateral institutions, and climate financing mechanisms, including the Global Environment Facility and the Adaptation Fund. Ghana believes that such cooperation is essential to advancing the objectives of the IHP and achieving SDG 6.

In conclusion, Ghana reaffirms its commitment to working closely with UNESCO, Japan, and all partners to strengthen water security, climate adaptation, and resilience to water-related disasters for the benefit of present and future generations.

Thank you.

Item 3.4 - Report of the Finance Committee

Summary

The report outlines the work of the IHP Finance Committee between November 2023 and November 2025, during which the Committee met five times with technical support from the Secretariat. Its work focused on three main priorities: revising the Committee's Terms of Reference, improving the quality and detail of financial information available to the Council and Bureau, and strengthening the financial dimension of the mid-term evaluation of IHP-IX. A revised draft of the Terms of Reference was prepared and submitted for consideration by the 27th Session of the Council.

The revised Terms of Reference seek to align the Committee's operations with the current Statutes and Rules of Procedure of the Council while clarifying membership arrangements,

election procedures, terms of office, and working methods. The revisions also introduce a handover reporting mechanism between outgoing and incoming Committees to ensure continuity and further define the Committee's role in financial review, resource mobilization, and programme evaluation.

The Committee also noted limitations in the current financial reporting framework, particularly the lack of detailed financial data below the C/5 level, which affects effective programme planning and assessment under IHP-IX. It emphasized the need for improved financial reporting and for the mid-term evaluation of IHP-IX to include a stronger financial analysis, especially regarding programme sustainability, monitoring costs, and funding structures. The report further stressed that the long-term sustainability of IHP depends on a balance between Regular Budget resources and extrabudgetary funding, highlighting the need to diversify the donor base and mobilize more flexible resources.

Intervention

Mr. Chairperson,
Distinguished Delegates,

The delegation of Ghana thanks the Finance Committee and the Secretariat for the comprehensive report and commends their efforts to strengthen the financial governance and sustainability of the IHP.

Ghana welcomes the proposed revision of the Terms of Reference of the Finance Committee, particularly the measures aimed at improving alignment with the Council's Rules of Procedure and introducing handover reports to ensure continuity and institutional memory.

Ghana further shares the concern regarding the limited availability of detailed financial information below the C/5 level and support continued dialogue with the Secretariat to improve financial reporting and transparency in order to better inform programme prioritization, financing gaps, and implementation decisions under IHP-IX.

Ghana further welcomes the inclusion of a stronger financial dimension in the mid-term evaluation of IHP-IX and recognizes the importance of assessing the sustainability and costs associated with programme implementation and reporting requirements.

In this regard, the Ghana delegation wishes to ask the following questions:

First, what concrete steps are being considered to improve access to more detailed financial information for Member States?

Second, what strategies are being pursued to diversify the donor base and mobilize more predictable and flexible resources for IHP, particularly in support of developing countries and Africa?

Third, how will the mid-term evaluation assess the financial sustainability and cost-effectiveness of IHP-IX implementation?

Ghana remains committed to supporting efforts to strengthen the transparency, effectiveness, and long-term sustainability of UNESCO's water programmes.

Thank you.

Item 3.5 - Report of the Communication and Outreach Committee

Summary

The report highlights significant strengthening of IHP communication and outreach activities through enhanced digital platforms and multilingual content. The IHP website and webpages have been updated in English, French, and Spanish, recording over 7,700 views for the main site and more than 119,000 views for IHP pages between May 2024 and April 2026. Special sections were also created for key milestones, including the 50th anniversary of IHP, which attracted over 5,000 views.

Communication around flagship global initiatives was further expanded, including the 2025 International Year of Glaciers' Preservation and the Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences, which together generated hundreds of thousands of views across dedicated webpages. In addition, World Water Day content was refreshed in all UN languages, and IHP issued 47 news items while achieving strong global visibility through UNESCO's homepage, social media platforms, and multimedia channels such as YouTube, and LinkedIn. The "Uniting Science for Water" LinkedIn community alone grew to over 1,600 members within months of its launch.

Despite these achievements, the report notes operational challenges, particularly staff shortages and staff turnover, which delayed implementation of the communication strategy and planned outreach tools such as regular newsletters. These constraints were partially mitigated through collaboration with UNESCO's Natural Sciences communication team and Water Family partners. Overall, cost-effective approaches such as temporary staffing and strengthened partnerships helped expand outreach impact and improve global visibility of IHP activities.

Intervention

The Chairperson,
Distinguished Delegates,

The delegation of Ghana commends the Secretariat for strengthening IHP communication and outreach through expanded digital platforms, multilingual content, and global engagement initiatives, which have significantly increased visibility of UNESCO's water programmes.

Ghana notes with appreciation the strong reach of key initiatives, including over 119,000 views of IHP webpages, 290,000 views for the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation, and the growth of digital communities such as the "Uniting science for water" LinkedIn group, alongside active use of social media, YouTube, and other platforms.

While welcoming these achievements, Ghana seeks clarification on how this increased digital visibility is translated into tangible policy impact and capacity-building at national level, particularly in developing countries. We also request information on measures to address unequal digital access and ensure more inclusive outreach, especially in Africa.

Ghana further asks how Member States are being more actively engaged beyond information sharing, and what steps are being taken to address staffing challenges affecting the implementation of the communication strategy.

In conclusion, Ghana encourages stronger collaboration with Field Offices, improved structured communication to Member States, and broader multilingual outreach to enhance inclusivity and effectiveness, while reaffirming its support for strengthened communication as a key tool for advancing SDG 6.

Thank you.

Item 4 - Report on the implementation of the resolutions and decisions adopted at the 26th session of the Intergovernmental Council of the IHP

Summary

This document provides information on the report of the implementation of the resolutions and decisions adopted at the 26th session of the Intergovernmental Council of the IHP.

Intervention / Action

The delegation may take note since some of the outcomes are being considered as separate items for the Council's consideration.

Item 5.1 - Programme Implementation of IHP-IX

Summary

The document presents progress made in the implementation of the ninth phase of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP-IX) under UNESCO's water sciences programme. It highlights activities carried out across the Programme's priority areas, including scientific research and innovation, water education, integrated water resources management, emerging technologies, citizen science, and water governance.

The report demonstrates significant advances in scientific research, capacity-building, and international cooperation in addressing global water challenges linked to climate change, floods, droughts, groundwater management, pollution, and water security. Activities implemented under Priority Area 1 strengthened scientific understanding of hydrological systems through applied research, modelling, innovation, and knowledge-sharing initiatives across Africa, Latin America, Asia, and Europe.

The report also highlights progress in water quality management, ecohydrology, hydrogeological modelling, flood risk reduction, and the application of nature-based solutions. Research initiatives on climate variability, groundwater vulnerability, water pollution, antimicrobial resistance, and hydrological extremes contributed to improved scientific knowledge and policy dialogue. UNESCO and its partners further strengthened cooperation through conferences, scientific publications, training programmes, and interdisciplinary research projects.

Important progress was also made in the use of emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), Earth Observation systems, and digital water management tools. These initiatives enhanced flood forecasting, hydrological monitoring, data management, and early warning systems in several Member States, including Ghana and Kenya. The report further notes the integration of IoT systems into the IHP Water Information Network System (IHP-WINS), contributing to real-time water monitoring and climate resilience.

The document emphasizes the growing role of citizen science and public engagement in hydrology. Programmes such as Citizens4Water and youth-focused initiatives

strengthened community participation, environmental awareness, and local data collection for water resources management and disaster risk reduction.

The report also outlines achievements under Priority Area 2 on Water Education in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, including youth leadership programmes, educational campaigns, technical training, academic exchanges, and collaborative research initiatives implemented through UNESCO Chairs, water museums, and regional networks.

Overall, the document demonstrates substantial progress in advancing the objectives of IHP-IX through scientific cooperation, innovation, capacity development, and strengthened partnerships aimed at supporting sustainable water management and the achievement of SDG 6.

Intervention

Mr. Chairperson,

Ghana thanks the Secretariat for presenting the report on the implementation of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme Phase IX.

We commend UNESCO and its partners for the significant progress achieved across the Programme's priority areas, particularly in scientific research, innovation, water education, climate resilience, and capacity-building initiatives aimed at strengthening sustainable water management globally.

Ghana welcomes the report's emphasis on science-based approaches to addressing growing water challenges related to climate change, floods, droughts, groundwater management, water quality, and disaster risk reduction. We particularly appreciate UNESCO's continued efforts to promote interdisciplinary research, knowledge-sharing, and international cooperation in the water sector.

The Ghana delegation also welcomes the increasing application of emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things systems, Earth Observation tools, and digital water platforms to strengthen hydrological monitoring, flood forecasting, and early warning systems. In this regard, Ghana appreciates the support provided through the IoT-Based Flood and Drought Monitoring Project and related capacity-building activities implemented in collaboration with UNESCO and partner institutions.

We further commend UNESCO's efforts in promoting citizen science, youth engagement, and community participation in water resources management. Initiatives aimed at strengthening local capacities and public awareness are essential to building resilience and ensuring inclusive and sustainable water governance.

Ghana also recognizes the important contributions made under Priority Area 2 on Water Education, particularly programmes supporting youth leadership, technical education, scientific exchange, and public awareness on water and climate-related issues.

In conclusion, Ghana reaffirms its commitment to supporting the objectives of IHP-IX and working closely with UNESCO, Member States, and partners to strengthen water security, climate resilience, scientific cooperation, and sustainable water management in pursuit of Sustainable Development Goal 6.

Thank you.

Item 5.2 - Regional Perspectives on the IHP

Summary

The document presents regional perspectives on the implementation of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP), highlighting achievements, initiatives, and cooperation activities undertaken by UNESCO Regional Offices and partners across Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and other regions under the framework of IHP-IX.

The report outlines progress made across the Programme's five priority areas, including scientific research and innovation, water education, data and knowledge systems, integrated water resources management, and science-based water governance. It demonstrates UNESCO's continued support to Member States through technical assistance, capacity-building, policy dialogue, research cooperation, and climate resilience initiatives.

In Africa, several important initiatives were implemented to strengthen ecohydrology, groundwater governance, flood resilience, climate adaptation, and early warning systems. UNESCO Offices in Accra, Dakar, Abuja, Bamako, Abidjan, and Eastern Africa supported training programmes, scientific workshops, youth engagement, and institutional coordination aimed at improving sustainable water management and resilience to climate change.

The report highlights Ghana's participation in several key initiatives, including the development of an Integrated Early Warning System for floods and droughts in the Volta Basin through collaboration between UNESCO, ICHARM, the University of Tokyo, and national institutions. Additional activities included training on IoT-based hydrological monitoring systems, Climate Risk-Informed Decision Analysis (CRIDA), citizen science programmes for youth, and school outreach activities around Lake Bosomtwe Biosphere Reserve.

Across Eastern and Southern Africa, UNESCO supported transboundary aquifer management, groundwater research, flood early warning systems, climate adaptation strategies, citizen science initiatives, and regional cooperation platforms. Important projects included the Kilimanjaro Transboundary Aquifer System initiative, groundwater information systems under the Horn of Africa Groundwater Access Facility, and flood resilience programmes in Kenya and Southern Africa.

The report also highlights activities in Central Africa and the Asia-Pacific region, including water education programmes, digital water governance initiatives, policy briefs, ecohydrology demonstration projects, and integrated urban water management systems.

Overall, the document demonstrates UNESCO's important role in promoting regional cooperation, scientific innovation, capacity development, climate resilience, and evidence-based water governance in support of sustainable development and water security.

Intervention

Mr. Chairperson,

Ghana thanks the Secretariat for presenting the report on the regional perspectives of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme.

We commend UNESCO Regional Offices and partners for the extensive work undertaken across the different regions in support of the implementation of IHP-IX and the advancement of sustainable water management, climate resilience, scientific cooperation, and capacity development.

Ghana particularly welcomes the strong focus on Africa and the numerous initiatives aimed at strengthening ecohydrology, groundwater management, early warning systems, citizen science, and climate adaptation. We appreciate UNESCO's support to Member States in addressing growing water-related challenges through science-based approaches and regional cooperation.

The Ghana delegation is especially encouraged by the progress achieved through collaborative initiatives implemented in Ghana, including the development of the Integrated Early Warning System for floods and droughts within the Volta Basin, capacity-building on IoT-based hydrological monitoring, CRIDA processes for climate adaptation planning, and youth engagement programmes on disaster risk reduction and citizen science.

We further commend UNESCO Accra and its partners for activities implemented around the Lake Bosomtwe Biosphere Reserve, including community training, school outreach

programmes, and awareness-raising initiatives promoting ecohydrology and sustainable water management.

Ghana also welcomes ongoing regional efforts aimed at strengthening transboundary water cooperation, groundwater governance, data-sharing systems, and climate-resilient water management across Africa. These initiatives are essential for improving resilience, supporting evidence-based decision-making, and achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6.

In conclusion, Ghana reaffirms its commitment to continued collaboration with UNESCO, regional institutions, and Member States in advancing the objectives of IHP-IX and strengthening regional cooperation for sustainable water resources management and climate resilience.

Thank you.

Item 5.3 - Alignment of Flagship Initiatives to IHP-IX and the Flagship Initiatives Framework

Summary

The document presents the draft resolution on the alignment of UNESCO Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP) Flagship Initiatives with the objectives of IHP-IX and the approved Framework for the Planning, Implementation and Monitoring of IHP Flagship Initiatives.

The draft resolution recalls previous resolutions adopted during the 25th and 26th Sessions of the IHP Intergovernmental Council, which established the requirement that all existing and new Flagship Initiatives comply with the approved framework for governance, implementation, coordination, and monitoring under IHP-IX.

The document recognizes the efforts made by several existing Flagship Initiatives, including FRIEND-Water, G-WADI, WLRI, ISI, IFI, IIWQ, HELP, UWMP, and WAMUNet, in aligning their activities and operational structures with the objectives and strategic priorities of IHP-IX. It further encourages the International Drought Initiative (IDI) to continue efforts toward full compliance with the framework.

The draft resolution also highlights progress made by UNESCO and its partners in consolidating groundwater-related initiatives under a unified structure. In this regard, it endorses the establishment of the UNESCO IHP Groundwater Flagship Initiative (GWFI), hosted by the International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre (IGRAC). The new

initiative serves as an umbrella mechanism integrating several groundwater programmes and initiatives, including MAR, GRAPHIC, WHYMAP, LaSII, and ISARM.

The document further encourages host institutions, partners, and the IHP Secretariat to continue strengthening governance arrangements, operational modalities, partnerships, and coordination mechanisms to maximize the collective contribution of the Flagship Initiatives toward the implementation of IHP-IX.

In addition, the resolution invites all members of the UNESCO Water Family, including UNESCO Category 2 Centres, UNESCO Chairs, IHP National Committees, and partner institutions, to support the implementation of the Flagship Initiatives through technical, scientific, and financial contributions.

Overall, the document seeks to strengthen coherence, coordination, effectiveness, and strategic alignment among UNESCO's water-related Flagship Initiatives in support of sustainable water management and the objectives of IHP-IX.

Intervention

Mr. Chairperson,

Ghana thanks the Secretariat for presenting the draft resolution on the alignment of the IHP Flagship Initiatives with IHP-IX and the Flagship Initiatives Framework.

We commend UNESCO, the IHP Secretariat, and all partners involved for the progress made in strengthening coordination and coherence among the various Flagship Initiatives under the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme.

Ghana welcomes the continued efforts of the existing Flagship Initiatives to align their governance structures, operational modalities, and programme activities with the objectives and strategic priorities of IHP-IX. We believe that stronger coordination and harmonization among these initiatives will enhance their collective impact and improve the effectiveness of UNESCO's support to Member States in addressing water-related challenges.

The Ghana delegation further welcomes the establishment of the UNESCO IHP Groundwater Flagship Initiative under the leadership of IGRAC. Given the increasing importance of groundwater resources for water security, climate resilience, and sustainable development, we consider this initiative timely and important for strengthening integrated groundwater management, scientific cooperation, and knowledge-sharing.

We also support the call for strengthened partnerships among the IHP Secretariat, host institutions, UNESCO Category 2 Centres, UNESCO Chairs, National Committees, and partner organizations. Enhanced collaboration and resource mobilization will be essential to ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of the Flagship Initiatives.

Ghana further encourages continued efforts to strengthen technical support, scientific research, innovation, and capacity-building, particularly for developing countries and vulnerable regions facing increasing pressures from climate change, water scarcity, and environmental degradation.

In conclusion, Ghana reaffirms its commitment to supporting the objectives of IHP-IX and working closely with UNESCO and Member States to advance science-based, inclusive, and sustainable water management through strengthened Flagship Initiatives.

Thank you.

Item 5.5 - Consideration of a Revised Proposal for ECOMED Academy

Summary

The report highlights efforts by the IHP Secretariat, the Lebanese IHP National Committee, the Cyprus Institute, and W-SMART to revise and finalize the ECOMED Academy proposal between 2024 and 2026. UNESCO also facilitated stakeholder consultations in Paris in December 2025 to strengthen regional engagement. Due to the ongoing regional situation, additional time was requested to finalize the proposal before submission to the 27th Session of the IHP Council.

Intervention

Mr. Chairperson, Ghana thanks the Secretariat for the update on the revised ECOMED Academy proposal and commends the efforts of all partners involved in advancing this important initiative despite the difficult regional circumstances.

Ghana welcomes the inclusive consultation process and recognizes the importance of the proposed Academy in strengthening scientific cooperation, capacity-building, innovation, and sustainable water management within the Mediterranean region and beyond.

We encourage continued collaboration among all stakeholders to ensure the successful finalization and implementation of the ECOMED Academy.

Thank you.

Item 5.6 - Report of the Working Group on the Megacities Alliance for Water and Climate (MAWAC)

Summary

The report presents progress made by the Working Group on establishing MAWAC as an IHP Flagship Initiative and UNESCO cooperation platform for cities. The revised framework focuses on urban water resilience, climate adaptation, scientific cooperation, innovation, and integrated urban water management. It also broadens participation to include megacities, large cities, and vulnerable urban centres, while proposing governance, implementation, and funding arrangements for the initiative.

Intervention

Mr. Chairperson, Ghana thanks the Working Group and the Secretariat for the comprehensive report on the proposed establishment of MAWAC.

Ghana welcomes the initiative as an important platform for strengthening scientific cooperation, knowledge sharing, and innovation on urban water management and climate resilience, particularly in rapidly urbanizing regions.

We commend the inclusive approach adopted for city participation and the emphasis on integrated solutions, including nature-based approaches, digital innovation, and climate adaptation.

Ghana further welcomes the proposed phased implementation approach and encourages adequate support for developing countries, particularly in Africa, to actively participate and benefit from the initiative.

In this regard, Ghana wishes to underscore the importance of considering not only population size, but also population density as a critical factor in the selection and prioritization of cities under the initiative, given its strong implications for urban water demand, infrastructure pressure, and climate vulnerability.

Thank you.

Item 5.7 – Towards a UNESCO Water Sciences Report (WSR)

Summary

The document presents a pre-feasibility study for the proposed UNESCO Water Sciences Report (WSR), intended to become a periodic global assessment on advances in water

science, science-based solutions, and applied water assessments. The proposed report responds to a major gap in the current global reporting landscape, as no existing publication systematically integrates scientific frontiers in water sciences with practical solutions and their application in national, basin, and transboundary assessments.

The WSR is conceived as a concrete contribution to the implementation of the IXth Phase of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP-IX), “Science for a Water Secure World in a Changing Environment,” and as a follow-up to the UN 2023 Water Conference call for stronger science-policy linkages. It is expected to support evidence-based policymaking, strengthen global water governance, and contribute to the implementation of SDG 6 and other water-related Sustainable Development Goals.

The proposed report will be organized into three complementary parts. The first part will provide a synthesis of global water science frontiers across key thematic areas such as hydrology, groundwater, ecohydrology, water quality, water management, hydrological extremes, and socio-hydrology. The second part will focus on science-based solutions, including methodologies, technologies, and best practices addressing water security, climate resilience, droughts, floods, water quality, and ecosystem sustainability. The third part will document the state of science-based water assessments at national, river basin, and transboundary levels, including case studies and local knowledge systems.

The study identified substantial gaps in existing global water reports, particularly regarding integrated assessments of water science frontiers and their practical applications. While moderate synergies exist with reports produced by WMO, IPCC, FAO, UNEP, and UN-Water, no current report combines frontier science, science-based solutions, and applied assessments in a single framework.

The proposed WSR would operate through an Executive Committee and three thematic Working Groups corresponding to the report’s three components. The process would rely heavily on contributions from UNESCO’s Water Family, UN agencies, professional organizations, and scientific institutions. The report is estimated to cost approximately USD 509,212 per edition and would be published every 4–8 years in alignment with UNESCO’s IHP phases.

The document also emphasizes the importance of capacity sharing, inclusion of Global South perspectives, open science approaches, indigenous knowledge systems, and strengthened collaboration among Member States and international partners. The report is expected to serve policymakers, scientists, water professionals, and international organizations through open-access publications, science-policy briefs, and online repositories.

Intervention

Mr. Chairperson,

Ghana thanks the Secretariat for the comprehensive pre-feasibility study on the proposed UNESCO Water Sciences Report and commends UNESCO and the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme for this important initiative.

Ghana welcomes the proposal to establish a periodic global report dedicated to water science frontiers, science-based solutions, and applied water assessments. We believe the proposed report responds to an important gap in the global water governance architecture and will strengthen the science-policy interface needed to address increasingly complex water challenges.

The Ghana delegation particularly appreciates the emphasis placed on evidence-based decision-making, climate resilience, hydrological extremes, water quality, and sustainable water management, which remain critical priorities for developing countries and vulnerable regions, especially in Africa.

Ghana further welcomes the proposed inclusive and collaborative approach involving UNESCO's Water Family, UN agencies, professional organizations, research institutions, and Member States. We strongly support efforts to ensure balanced regional representation, greater participation of scientists from the Global South, and the integration of indigenous and local knowledge systems into water assessments.

We also commend the proposed focus on science-based solutions and practical applications at national and river basin levels. Ghana believes that strengthening the translation of scientific knowledge into policy and operational tools is essential for improving water governance, climate adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable development outcomes.

Ghana encourages UNESCO to ensure that adequate financial and technical resources are mobilized for the successful implementation of the report while avoiding duplication with existing global assessments. We further support the proposed collaboration with organizations such as WMO, FAO, UNEP, IPCC, and UN-Water to strengthen synergies and maximize impact.

In conclusion, Ghana reaffirms its commitment to supporting UNESCO's efforts in advancing water sciences, promoting international scientific cooperation, and strengthening global water security through science-informed policymaking and sustainable water management.

Thank you.

Item 5.8 - Report on the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation (2025) and the UN Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences (2025-2034)

Additional information on this sub-item is provided in the Reference Document IHP/IC XXVII/Ref.5.8 **(yet to be uploaded)**

Item 5.9 - Cooperation with other UNESCO programmes

Summary

The UNESCO IHP has strengthened collaboration with several UNESCO programmes to promote freshwater management, climate resilience, citizen science, and environmental stewardship. Working closely with the Man and the Biosphere Programme and the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Section, IHP has supported community-based monitoring of freshwater resources through citizen science initiatives, digital data tools, and standardized monitoring protocols. These efforts enhance local participation, environmental awareness, and resilience in Biosphere Reserves and island ecosystems.

IHP has also partnered with UNESCO's Education Sector, the Local and Indigenous Knowledge (LINKS) Section, and the World Heritage Centre to integrate water and climate monitoring into schools, strengthen scientific learning, and develop joint projects across UNESCO-designated wetland and heritage sites. In addition, collaborative initiatives such as the "Glaciers on the Edge" exhibition have highlighted the importance of glaciers for freshwater supply, biodiversity conservation, and climate adaptation while showcasing the experiences of local communities affected by environmental change.

Beyond UNESCO programmes, IHP has expanded cooperation with the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme and the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics on climate-smart groundwater research and innovative hydro-meteorological monitoring technologies. These partnerships support research, disaster risk reduction, and climate resilience initiatives in Africa, including Ghana, while promoting the adoption of real-time water information systems and sustainable environmental management practices.

Intervention

Ghana commends the UNESCO IHP Secretariat for its strong collaboration with other UNESCO programmes and institutions. Ghana particularly welcomes the partnerships with the Man and the Biosphere Programme, the World Heritage Centre, the Education Sector, and the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme, which clearly reflect

UNESCO's "Working as One" approach through interdisciplinary cooperation to address global environmental and development challenges.

Ghana appreciates the emphasis on citizen science, youth engagement, and the use of digital tools for freshwater and climate monitoring, especially in under-monitored regions. These initiatives are important for strengthening scientific awareness, local participation, and evidence-based water governance in developing countries. Ghana therefore encourages UNESCO to continue supporting capacity-building, technology transfer, and improved access to hydrological data systems for African Member States, while also promoting the integration of indigenous knowledge and ecosystem-based approaches into water resource management and climate adaptation strategies.

Ghana further notes the important collaboration between IHP and the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics on innovative hydro-meteorological monitoring systems and climate resilience initiatives across Africa, including Ghana. We encourage UNESCO to strengthen regional cooperation, data sharing, and technical support to enhance early warning systems and disaster preparedness.

Thank you.

Item 6 – Report on the Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of IHP and 60 Years of Water Sciences at UNESCO

Summary

The report presents a comprehensive account of the global celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP) and 60 years of water sciences at UNESCO. The anniversary, commemorated throughout 2025, included a high-level event at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, complemented by a wide range of national, regional, and global activities.

These activities, including conferences, webinars, workshops, and exhibitions, highlighted the achievements of IHP in advancing hydrological sciences, strengthening international cooperation, and supporting Member States in addressing emerging water challenges. The celebration also provided an opportunity to reflect on future priorities, including scientific innovation, open science, strengthened partnerships, and enhanced science-to-policy linkages.

Intervention

Ghana commends the UNESCO IHP Secretariat for successfully organising the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Programme, which have provided a valuable platform to reflect on its achievements and future direction.

Ghana congratulates UNESCO on five decades of leadership in advancing hydrological sciences and fostering international cooperation in support of sustainable water resources management. We particularly welcome the broad global participation and the strong emphasis on innovation, partnerships, and science-based policy development reflected in the anniversary activities.

At the national level, Ghana is pleased to have actively contributed to the anniversary celebrations through:

- The organisation of a **national commemorative event in July 2025**, which brought together a wide and highly appreciable representation of policymakers, scientists, students from two senior high schools, and development partners, demonstrating strong youth engagement with approximately 36% youth participation, and a gender distribution of about 24% women and 76% men;
- The successful hosting of **two technical webinars in May and August 2025**, namely “*Safeguarding Ghana’s Water and WASH Futures*” and “*Understanding and Mitigating Water-Related Disasters*,” both of which recorded highly appreciable levels of participation, including an average representation of approximately 34% women and 66% men.

These initiatives brought together key stakeholders from government, academia, and the water sector and contributed to knowledge exchange and awareness creation on water security challenges in Ghana.

Ghana also contributed to the global documentation of the anniversary by submitting technical reports on activities undertaken at the national level.

Ghana welcomes the key outcomes of the celebration, particularly the emphasis on emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and Earth observation, the promotion of open science, and the strengthening of science-to-policy linkages. These priorities are highly relevant to developing countries, including those in Africa, where water security challenges are increasing due to climate variability and competing demands.

In this regard, Ghana wishes to emphasize the importance of:

- Strengthening capacity-building efforts for Member States in hydrological monitoring, data management, and water governance;

- Enhancing the translation of scientific knowledge into practical policy and regulatory frameworks;
- Promoting regional and South-South cooperation to address shared water challenges; and
- Increasing the participation of youth and women in water sciences and governance.

Ghana further underscores the need to sustain the momentum generated by the anniversary celebrations through continued support to national IHP committees, strengthened knowledge-sharing platforms, and enhanced collaboration among Member States and UNESCO partners.

In conclusion, Ghana reaffirms its commitment to the objectives of the IHP and remains ready to continue working closely with UNESCO and all partners to advance water security, resilience, and sustainable development.

Thank you.

Item 7 - IHP-IX Mid-term Evaluation

Summary

The document presents the mid-term evaluation of the ninth phase of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP-IX), entitled Science for a Water Secure World in a Changing Environment (2022–2029). The evaluation, conducted by UNESCO's Division of Internal Oversight Services (IOS), assesses progress made in implementing IHP-IX and examines the programme's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and financial viability.

The evaluation found that IHP-IX remains highly relevant and aligned with Member States' priorities and major global frameworks, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the outcomes of the 2023 United Nations Water Conference. UNESCO's comparative advantages were identified in its scientific credibility, intergovernmental mandate, convening power, and leadership in knowledge generation and capacity-building.

At the same time, the evaluation highlighted several operational challenges affecting implementation. These include the broad scope of the IHP-IX strategic framework, uneven implementation across priority areas, limited outcome-based reporting, and complex governance and coordination mechanisms. The evaluation also noted that engagement with policymakers beyond formal statutory meetings remains insufficient, limiting the programme's overall science-policy impact.

The report further identified sustainability and financial concerns, including high vacancy levels within the IHP Secretariat, limited and unpredictable financial resources, and heavy reliance on earmarked voluntary contributions. Fragmented monitoring and reporting systems were also found to constrain effective decision-making and prioritization.

To address these issues, the evaluation proposed six recommendations focused on narrowing and prioritizing IHP-IX activities, strengthening operational targets and monitoring systems, streamlining governance mechanisms, enhancing cooperation with IHP National Committees, improving communication strategies, and developing a stronger financial and resource mobilization framework. These measures are intended to strengthen IHP's role in supporting Member States to achieve SDG 6 and advance evidence-based water management.

Intervention

Mr. Chairperson,

Ghana thanks the Secretariat for presenting the mid-term evaluation report of the ninth phase of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme.

We commend UNESCO's Division of Internal Oversight Services for undertaking this important evaluation, which provides a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of IHP-IX and offers valuable recommendations for strengthening the programme over the remainder of the phase.

Ghana welcomes the evaluation's recognition of the continued relevance of IHP-IX and UNESCO's comparative advantages in scientific cooperation, capacity-building, and promoting science-based policymaking in the water sector. We agree that the Programme remains critical to supporting Member States in addressing growing water challenges linked to climate change, disaster risks, groundwater management, and sustainable development.

The Ghana delegation also takes note of the challenges identified in the report, particularly those relating to limited financial resources, governance complexity, uneven implementation, the need for stronger monitoring and reporting mechanisms, and the high vacancy levels within the IHP Secretariat. While we support efforts aimed at improving coordination, enhancing operational effectiveness, and strengthening the science-policy interface within the framework of IHP-IX, we also wish to request for an update on efforts being done to address the issue of high vacancy levels at the IHP secretariat.

Ghana further welcomes the recommendations calling for clearer prioritization, improved communication, stronger engagement with Member States and National Committees, and more sustainable resource mobilization strategies. In our view, these measures will help reinforce the effectiveness and visibility of the Programme while ensuring better alignment with the needs and priorities of Member States.

We also wish to emphasize the importance of sustained support for capacity-building, hydrological monitoring, climate resilience, and transboundary water cooperation, particularly for developing countries and vulnerable regions, including Africa and Small Island Developing States.

In conclusion, Ghana reaffirms its commitment to working closely with UNESCO, the IHP Secretariat, and all Member States in advancing the objectives of IHP-IX and promoting sustainable water management for the achievement of SDG 6.

Thank you.

Item 8 - Roadmap for IHP transformation and strategic reinforcement

Summary

The UNESCO IHP recognizes that global water-related challenges are becoming more severe due to climate change, rising water demand, ecosystem degradation, and increasing variability in the hydrological cycle. With over fifty years of experience, IHP continues to serve as a unique intergovernmental platform dedicated to freshwater science, capacity development, and evidence-based water governance. Over the years, the programme has evolved from a purely hydrological research initiative into a broader integrated scientific programme that supports Member States through research, knowledge generation, practical tools, and strengthened water governance, while working closely with UNESCO's wider "Water Family" and United Nations partners.

As the ninth phase of IHP approaches its conclusion alongside the end of the 2030 Agenda, UNESCO sees the preparation of the next phase (2030–2037) as an important opportunity to strengthen the programme's future strategic direction and global relevance. The proposed roadmap includes establishing a Task Force and conducting broad consultations with Member States, UNESCO partners, UN agencies, and scientific organizations to develop a new strategy for adoption by the IHP Council in 2028 and endorsement by the UNESCO General Conference in 2029. The roadmap aims to build on the achievements of previous phases while positioning IHP to respond more effectively to emerging global water challenges and the evolving water governance landscape.

Intervention

Ghana commends the Secretariat of the UNESCO IHP for presenting the roadmap for the transformation and strategic reinforcement of IHP towards its next phase. Ghana recognizes the growing global water challenges arising from climate change, ecosystem degradation, and increasing water demand, and therefore welcomes the effort to reposition IHP to remain relevant, effective, and responsive to the needs of Member States in the post-2030 era.

Ghana supports the establishment of a dedicated Working Group or Task Force to guide the development of the roadmap and future strategic framework of IHP. Such an approach is consistent with UNESCO's long-standing consultative practice in developing major programme strategies and reforms, including previous IHP phases and other intergovernmental scientific programmes. Ghana believes that a structured and inclusive Working Group will strengthen transparency, technical quality, regional representation, and ownership by Member States, while ensuring that lessons from previous phases are adequately incorporated into the future direction of the Programme.

Ghana further emphasizes that the Working Group should ensure balanced geographical representation, particularly for African Member States and other vulnerable regions, while engaging UNESCO's Water Family, scientific institutions, indigenous knowledge holders, youth, and relevant UN agencies in line with the "Working as One UNESCO" approach. We encourage greater focus on innovation, groundwater governance, climate resilience, digital monitoring systems, capacity-building, and sustainable financing to ensure that the next phase of IHP is well-positioned to address emerging global water challenges and support the achievement of future development goals.

Item 10.1 – Status and operation of the UNESCO Water Family

Summary

The document provides an overview of the UNESCO Water Family, which comprises 29 water-related Category 2 Centres, 103 UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks, 170 IHP National Committees and Focal Points, and 17 IHP Flagship Initiatives.

These entities collectively support the implementation of IHP priorities through scientific research, capacity development, and policy engagement. The report highlights their global distribution, noting strong participation across regions, including 42 IHP National Committees in Africa, demonstrating active engagement at the national level.

The UNESCO Water Family also works in close collaboration with the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) and UNESCO Field Offices to advance water science, knowledge dissemination, and international cooperation.

Intervention

Ghana thanks the Secretariat for the comprehensive report on the UNESCO Water Family and recognises its important role in advancing water science, capacity development, and international cooperation.

We note with appreciation the broad network of Category 2 Centres, UNESCO Chairs, National Committees and Flagship Initiatives, as well as the strong representation of IHP National Committees in Africa, which reflects active regional engagement.

Ghana commends the IHP Secretariat and UNESCO Field Offices for their coordination and efforts in fostering collaboration across regions.

Ghana emphasises the need to strengthen synergies within the UNESCO Water Family to maximise impact. In this regard, we encourage:

- enhanced coordination among its various components;
- increased support to National Committees; and
- stronger alignment between global initiatives and national priorities.

We further underscore the importance of translating the outputs of the UNESCO Water Family into practical policy actions and capacity development outcomes at the national level.

In conclusion, Ghana reaffirms its commitment to the objectives of the IHP and stands ready to continue working with UNESCO and Member States to strengthen the effectiveness of the UNESCO Water Family.

Item 10.2 – Specific actions for the management of Category 2 Centres’ network / Mapping of water-related Category 2 institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO

Summary

The document presents an overview of water-related Category 2 Centres and Institutes under the auspices of UNESCO, including their regional distribution and operational status.

It highlights disparities in global distribution, with a concentration of centres in Western Europe and Asia and limited representation in Africa and the Arab States.

The report also outlines the status of agreements governing these centres, noting that while most are signed and in force, some are under renewal or pending signature.

Intervention

Ghana thanks the Secretariat for the comprehensive report on the management and mapping of water-related Category 2 Centres under the auspices of UNESCO. Ghana acknowledges the important role of these centres in advancing scientific research, capacity development, and technical cooperation in water resources management across Member States.

Ghana notes the current global distribution of Category 2 water centres as presented in the report, which indicates a concentration in regions such as Western Europe and Asia, while Africa is represented by only two centres.

In this regard, Ghana wishes to underscore the need for greater geographical balance, particularly to strengthen Africa's participation in UNESCO's water science network. Enhanced regional representation will support more effective responses to water challenges on the continent, including climate variability, water scarcity, and increasing demand pressures.

Ghana also notes that while the majority of Category 2 Centres are operational, the report highlights cases where renewal processes are still pending or incomplete, which may affect continuity and effectiveness of these institutions. We therefore encourage the Secretariat and concerned Member States to expedite these processes to ensure the sustained functioning of the centres.

Ghana further emphasizes the importance of strengthening collaboration between Category 2 Centres and Member States, particularly through:

- knowledge sharing and joint research initiatives;
- training and capacity-building programmes tailored to regional needs; and
- improved access to data, tools, and technical expertise.

Such collaboration is essential to ensure that the work of these centres translates into tangible benefits at national and regional levels.

Ghana also encourages UNESCO to explore opportunities for establishing additional Category 2 Centres in underrepresented regions, particularly in Africa, in order to bridge capacity gaps and promote equitable participation in global water science initiatives.

In conclusion, Ghana reaffirms its support for strengthening the network of Category 2 Centres and stands ready to collaborate with UNESCO and Member States to advance water security, capacity development, and scientific cooperation.

Thank you.

Item 10.3 – UNESCO World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) including IHP contribution to World Water Development Reports

Summary

The report highlights the activities of the UNESCO World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP), including the preparation and dissemination of the United Nations World Water Development Reports (WWDR) for 2025 and 2026, coordinated by UNESCO on behalf of UN-Water.

The WWDR 2025 focused on mountains and glaciers as water towers, while the WWDR 2026 addressed water for all people: equal rights and opportunities, with extensive multilingual dissemination to enhance global accessibility.

The reports were widely disseminated through international events and national launches in over 20 countries, reaching thousands of decision-makers.

WWAP also implemented capacity-building initiatives, including training programmes for professionals and decision-makers, and continued to promote inclusive approaches such as gender-responsive water management and knowledge dissemination in indigenous languages.

Intervention

Ghana thanks the Secretariat and commends UNESCO and WWAP for their leadership in producing the World Water Development Reports as key global references for water policy and planning.

Ghana welcomes the focus of the 2025 and 2026 Reports on critical issues such as water security, equity, and inclusion, which are highly relevant to developing countries.

At the national level, Ghana demonstrated its commitment by launching the 2025 World Water Development Report during the national World Water Day celebrations and has further engaged with WWAP in contributing towards the development of the 2026 Report.

Ghana also appreciates ongoing efforts in capacity-building, inclusive approaches, and global dissemination of the Reports.

We emphasise the need to strengthen linkages between global assessments and national policy processes, expand capacity-building efforts, and improve data generation to support evidence-based decision-making.

In conclusion, Ghana reaffirms its commitment to supporting WWAP and advancing inclusive and sustainable water management.

Thank you.

Item 11.1 - Cooperation with Intergovernmental Organizations, Scientific Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations

Summary

The document presents UNESCO-IHP's cooperation with intergovernmental organizations, scientific associations, non-governmental organizations and other international partners in advancing water security, groundwater governance, transboundary water cooperation, capacity development, climate resilience, youth engagement and science-based policymaking.

UNESCO-IHP reports cooperation with several major partners, including AMCOW, GWP, OECD, IAH, IWRA, IAHS, WWC, Comitato Italiano ONE Water and the Institut méditerranéen de l'eau. These partnerships support groundwater cooperation, water governance, scientific exchange, capacity development, publications, policy support and regional water security.

Intervention

Ghana welcomes UNESCO-IHP's cooperation with key partners, including the African Ministers' Council on Water, Global Water Partnership, OECD, International Association of Hydrogeologists, International Water Resources Association, International Association of Hydrological Sciences, World Water Council and other regional and scientific institutions.

Ghana particularly commends UNESCO's collaboration with AMCOW, especially in supporting Africa-focused sessions on early warning systems, transboundary

groundwater, capacity development, water governance and Africa's water security. Ghana also welcomes UNESCO's contribution to the Africa Water Vision 2063, which is an important framework for strengthening water security and sustainable development on the continent.

The Ghana delegation encourages UNESCO-IHP to deepen its cooperation with AMCOW and other African institutions to ensure that African Member States benefit more directly from technical assistance, training, knowledge-sharing, groundwater assessment, early warning systems and policy support.

Ghana further welcomes the cooperation with GWP on SDG 6.5.1 and SDG 6.5.2 reporting, as well as the partnerships with IAH, IWRA and IAHS in advancing groundwater science, water governance, research, publications and capacity development. These partnerships are essential for strengthening the scientific basis of water management and improving decision-making at national, regional and global levels.

Ghana encourages UNESCO-IHP to ensure that these partnerships produce practical outcomes for Member States, particularly in developing countries, through technical support, capacity-building, access to data and tools, and stronger participation of national experts in international scientific platforms.

Item 11.2 - IHP's Role in the 11th World Water Forum

Summary

UNESCO-IHP and WWAP are actively involved in preparations for the 11th World Water Forum, to be held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in 2027. UNESCO has been selected as Topic Coordinator for Groundwater and Surface Water, Knowledge Sharing and Capacity Development, and Efficiency in Water Management.

Intervention

Ghana welcomes UNESCO-IHP's active role in preparations for the 11th World Water Forum, scheduled to take place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in 2027.

Ghana notes with appreciation that UNESCO has been selected as Topic Coordinator for three important thematic areas: Groundwater and Surface Water, Knowledge Sharing and Capacity Development, and Efficiency in Water Management. These themes are directly relevant to Ghana and other African countries, where groundwater remains a critical source of water supply, particularly for rural communities, small towns and climate-vulnerable areas.

Ghana encourages UNESCO-IHP to use its leadership role in the Forum to promote greater attention to groundwater development, aquifer protection, managed recharge, water quality, climate resilience, and the strengthening of national hydrological services.

Ghana also welcomes the planned mobilization of IHP National Committees, Category 2 Centres and UNESCO Chairs in the preparatory process. We encourage the Secretariat to ensure strong and balanced participation of African Member States, young water professionals, researchers and water institutions in the Forum's consultations and events.

The Ghana delegation further supports UNESCO-IHP's emphasis on youth engagement and capacity development. We believe that the 11th World Water Forum should provide practical opportunities for young professionals, especially from developing countries, to contribute to global water discussions and benefit from knowledge exchange and mentorship.

Item 11.3 - IHP's Role in Other Key International Events and Agendas

Summary

UNESCO-IHP highlights its involvement in key international water and climate events, including the Dushanbe Water Process, World Water Week 2025, the IWRA World Water Congress, COP29 and COP30. These engagements strengthen UNESCO-IHP's leadership in hydrological science, climate adaptation, cryosphere science, water governance and youth participation.

Intervention

Ghana commends UNESCO-IHP for its active engagement in major international water and climate events, including the Dushanbe Water Process, World Water Week 2025, the IWRA World Water Congress, and the UNFCCC COP29 and COP30 processes.

Ghana welcomes UNESCO's contribution to the Dushanbe Water Process and its role in supporting the implementation of the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018–2028. We also note UNESCO's role as a member of the International Advisory Committee and its contribution to preparations toward the UN 2026 Water Conference.

Ghana further welcomes UNESCO-IHP's contribution to World Water Week 2025, especially its work on groundwater cooperation, transboundary aquifer management and youth engagement. These areas are important for strengthening regional cooperation, improving scientific understanding and promoting inclusive water governance.

Ghana also commends UNESCO-IHP's participation in the IWRA World Water Congress, particularly the co-organization of sessions on capacity development and cooperation with basin organizations. Capacity development remains essential for countries seeking to improve hydrological monitoring, groundwater management, water quality assessment and climate adaptation planning.

With regard to COP29 and COP30, Ghana welcomes UNESCO-IHP's strong visibility in promoting water and climate action, cryosphere science, urban water resilience, Nationally Determined Contributions, National Adaptation Plans and the Global Goal on Adaptation. Ghana recognizes the importance of ensuring that water is fully integrated into climate policy, adaptation planning and resilience-building.

Ghana encourages UNESCO-IHP to continue supporting Member States, particularly African and climate-vulnerable countries, in translating global water and climate discussions into practical national actions. This should include support for hydrological data systems, early warning systems, water-related disaster risk reduction, groundwater monitoring, climate-resilient water supply systems and the integration of water into national adaptation plans.

In conclusion, Ghana reaffirms its commitment to working with UNESCO-IHP, AMCOW and all relevant partners to advance water security, climate resilience, sustainable groundwater management and international scientific cooperation. Ghana supports continued collaboration with intergovernmental organizations, scientific associations and non-governmental organizations to strengthen the implementation of IHP-IX and accelerate progress toward SDG 6.

Thank you.

Acronyms and Full Meanings

Acronym	Full meaning
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AGWA	Alliance for Global Water Adaptation
AMCOW	African Ministers' Council on Water
COP	Conference of the Parties
GWP	Global Water Partnership
GWSI	Global Water Security Issues
IAC	International Advisory Committee

IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IAH	International Association of Hydrogeologists
IAHS	International Association of Hydrological Sciences
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
IGRAC	International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre
IGO	Intergovernmental Organization
IHP	Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme
IHP-IX	Ninth Phase of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme
IME	Institut méditerranéen de l'eau
INBO	International Network of Basin Organizations
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ISW	International Secretariat for Water
IW:LEARN	International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network
IWMI	International Water Management Institute
IWRA	International Water Resources Association
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
IYGP2025	International Year of Glaciers' Preservation 2025
NAPs	National Adaptation Plans
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDG 6	Sustainable Development Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SIWI	Stockholm International Water Institute
UN	United Nations
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WGI	Water Governance Initiative
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WWAP	World Water Assessment Programme
WWC	World Water Council
11th WWForum	11th World Water Forum

ANNEX – ITEM 4

Report on the implementation of the resolutions and decisions adopted at the 26th session of the Intergovernmental Council of the IHP (item 4)

Resolution XXVI-1: Framework for the Planning, Implementation and Monitoring of IHP-IX

Requests	the five thematic open-ended working groups and three additional crosssectoral groups to engage in the biennial implementation cycle as elaborated in IHP/IC-XXVI/Inf.5.1.1 and to actively participate in the planning, implementation, reporting and monitoring phases of the IHP-IX;
Further requests	the IHP Secretariat to report on the progress of the IHP-IX Implementation and the Performance Indicators of the IHP-IX in each of the Council sessions of the Phase IX;
Further requests	the IHP Secretariat to continue enhancing the IHP-IX reporting platform, including key innovations and research findings to ensure wider outreach and knowledge sharing to foster greater impacts and outcomes of the activities among the UNESCO Water Family members and partners; [as well as to the 27th Session of the IHP Council;
Recommends	to the IHP Secretariat to contribute to the implementation of the UN Systemwide Strategy for Water and Sanitation through IHP-IX by taking into consideration the national circumstances and priorities, within its

	mandate and to report on these efforts at the 27th session of the IHP Council;
Invites	the Member States and members of the UNESCO Water Family to continue reporting their activities prior to the Council sessions through the platform put in place;
Encourages	all UNESCO Water Family Members and partners to be more involved and to take up the responsibility in the implementation of the IHP-IX.

Actions taken:

1. The IHP-IX reporting platform remained fully operational since the 26th Session of the IHP, which was evidenced by a significant increase in reporting by Member States and the UNESCO Water Family, resulting in 517 more activities implemented and reported between the 26th and 27th IHP Council. A full report on IHP-IX Programme Implementation is available under the respective agenda item 5.

Resolution XXVI-2: Alignment of Flagship Initiatives to IHP-IX and the Flagship Initiatives Framework

Encourages	the IHP Flagship Initiatives IIWQ and WAMU-NET ¹ to finalize their alignment with the IHP Flagship Initiatives Framework and report on this to the 64th session of the IHP Bureau;
Requests	that the Flagship Initiatives HELP, UWMP, IDI ² should continue to make all efforts in aligning to the new Flagship Initiatives Framework and present recommendations to the 27th session of the IHP Council regarding their possible future role in IHP-IX;
Further requests	the Secretariat to finalize by the 64th session of the IHP Bureau establishing an overall umbrella groundwater initiative building on the 5 initiatives Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR), Groundwater Resources Assessment under the Pressures of Humanity and Climate Change (GRAPHIC) Programme, World-wide Hydrogeological Mapping and Assessment Programme (WHYMAP), Land Subsidence International Initiative (LaSII), and the International Shared Aquifer Resources Management (ISARM);
Decides	to discontinue the initiative From Potential Conflict to Cooperation Potential (PCCP) Programme and to continue strengthening its work on water cooperation with the monitoring of SDG 6.5.2

	indicator and by better mobilizing its relevant Water Family and related international networks;
Encourages	the current hosts/secretariat of the Flagship Initiatives to consider the best way forward in their implementation and to work closely together with the IHP Secretariat to determine the best pathway to maximize their contribution to the IHP-IX;
Further invites	all Members of the UNESCO Water Family to support the implementation of the IHP Flagship Initiatives by providing technical and/or financial support.

Actions taken:

2. For the actions taken in response to this Resolution, please refer to Sub-item 5.3 Report on the IHP Flagship Initiatives and their alignment to the new framework in information document IHP/IC-XXVII/Inf.5.

Resolution XXVI-3: Feasibility of the ECOMED Academy Network Proposal

Requests	the Lebanese IHP National Committee to further develop the proposal of the ECOMED Academy network, taking into consideration the highlighted issues resulting from the survey and conducting necessary consultations with all relevant Member States in the Mediterranean region, as well as with relevant stakeholders, including international, regional and national organization with similar objectives, including possible cooperation with the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the UNEP Programme for the Assessment and Control of Marine Pollution in the Mediterranean (UNEP MED POL) and the Mediterranean Action Plan and other UN agencies, especially the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN ESCWA) and UNICEF in view of developing an implementation plan;
Invites	the Lebanese IHP National Committee, in consultation with participating Member States, to submit a revised proposal of the ECOMED Academy network, following the application process for the establishment of a new IHP initiative, in line with the relevant frameworks, for consideration by the IHP Intergovernmental Council at the 27th session, as a contribution to the IHP-IX Operational Implementation Plan;

Requests	the IHP Secretariat to facilitate, by providing guidance and advice, in the further development of the proposal, in line with the relevant frameworks;
Encourages	Member States to support this proposal.

Actions taken:

3. From September 2024 to April 2026, the IHP Secretariat supported and facilitated the revision and further development of the ECOMED proposal, by providing regular guidance and advice to the Lebanese IHP National Committee and W-SMART (France). In addition, with the aim to enable consultations with member states and stakeholders of the Mediterranean region on the revision of the ECOMED proposal, the IHP Secretariat facilitated an in-person Stakeholder Consultation Meeting on the further development of the ECOMED proposal at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris on 16-17 December 2025.

4. The Lebanese IHP National Committee, the Cyprus Institute (as the proposed host institution of the ECOMED Academy) and W-SMART (as the proposed secretariat of the ECOMED Academy) are revising the ECOMED proposal for its submission to the 27th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council for consideration and approval of the proposed ECOMED Academy network.

5. Detailed information is provided under Agenda sub-item 5.5 and in the working document IHP/IC-XXVII/5.

Resolution XXVI-4: Initiating the Process of the Establishment of a Megacities Alliance on Water and Climate Change (MAWAC) as a UNESCO Cooperation Platform

Invites	the IHP Secretariat to revamp the Working Group to develop a proposal for the establishment of the Megacities Alliance on Water and Climate Change (MAWAC) as an IHP Flagship Initiative, in line with the new Framework for IHP Flagship Initiatives, for consideration by the IHP Intergovernmental Council at the 27th session, of its potential contribution to the IHP-IX phase;
Requests	the IHP Secretariat to facilitate, provide guidance and advice in the further development of the proposal, in line with the Framework of the IHP Flagship Initiatives;
Encourages	Member States to support this initiative.

Actions taken:

6. The new Working Group on MAWAC was formed, comprising six experts representing six UNESCO regional groups, through nominations by the IHP Council Vice-Chairpersons between September to December 2024 and endorsement by the IHP Bureau via an electronic consultation in January 2025. The group conducted its work in a fully online modality through 18 monthly and weekly online meetings held from February 2025 to April 2026. The new Working Group reviewed and further elaborated the previously-existing, but incomplete, draft document of the MAWAC framework, by aligning it with urban water and climate challenges, IHP-IX priorities and relevant global agendas. The IHP Secretariat facilitated two Stakeholder consultations, held online in April 2025 and February 2026, to incorporate views and feedback of previous working group members and stakeholders in the further development of the MAWAC framework.

7. The new Working Group finalized, by consensus, the MAWAC framework document (IHP/ICXXVII/Ref.5.6) and agreed to submit it, along with the group's report (IHP/IC-XXVII/Inf.5), to the 27th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council for consideration and approval to establish MAWAC as a new IHP flagship initiative and UNESCO platform for cities.

8. Detailed information is provided under Agenda sub-item 5.6 and in the working document IHP/IC-XXVII/5.

Resolution XXVI-5: Towards a UNESCO Water Sciences Report**Decides**

to establish a task force comprising experts from Member States, taking into account proper regional representation, UN agencies, the UNESCO Water Family, international scientific organizations related to water, to develop a pre-feasibility study on the proposed report, that addresses the gaps in the area and the utility of the initiative, the cost implications and suggestions for possible following steps, to be presented at the 27th Intergovernmental Council.

Actions taken:

9. The IHP Secretariat established the Task Force requested under Resolution XXVI-5. The Task Force was comprised of 24 experts appointed by Member States, with two experts from each UNESCO region, one representative of the UNESCO Water Family from each region, representatives of three United Nations partner agencies (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Environment Programme and World Meteorological Organization), and three international scientific organizations (International Association of Hydrological Sciences, International Water Resources

Association and International Association of Hydrogeologists). The Task Force met ten times during 2025–2026, including one in-person meeting hosted by the Republic of Korea.

10. The Task Force completed the pre-feasibility study requested by the Council and submitted it for consideration by the 27th Intergovernmental Council. The study identifies the absence of a periodic global synthesis of peer-reviewed water science and recommends the establishment of a UNESCO Water Sciences Report issued every four to eight years, aligned with IHP phases. It proposes a report structured around three components: water science frontiers, science-based solutions to major water challenges, and the status of science-based water assessments. The study proposes a governance structure, an estimated cost of USD 509,000 per edition, and financing through voluntary and in-kind contributions. The prefeasibility study, executive summary and draft resolution are presented in document IHP/IC-XXVII/Inf.5 and Draft Resolution 5.7.

Resolution XXVI-6: Celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP)

Decides	to establish a task force comprising the members of IHP bureau and members of communication and outreach committee to finalize the plan of the celebration and coordinate with the Secretariat, Member States and water family the celebration of 50th Anniversary of IHP throughout the year 2025;
Requests	The task force in coordination with the Secretariat to report to the 64th IHP Bureau session in 2025 on the progress and to the 27th session of IHP Council on the achievements of the celebration;
Encourages	State parties and other stakeholders to engage in the celebration by organizing international, national or regional events to promote the objectives of the IHP and to share their planned activities with the IHP Secretariat;
Invites	all Members States and the UNESCO Water Family to support the celebration of IHP 50th anniversary up to the highest level, at national, regional, basin and global levels by providing technical and/or financial support.

Actions taken:

11. The task force comprising the members of IHP Bureau and of the Communication and Outreach Committee finalized the plan of the celebration and coordinated with the Secretariat, Member States and UNESCO Water Family the celebration of 50th Anniversary of IHP throughout the year 2025.

12. The task force in coordination with the Secretariat reported to the 64th IHP Bureau session in 2025 on the progress. The report to the 27th session of IHP Council on the achievements of the celebration can be found in Information document IHP/IC-XXVII/Inf.6.

Resolution XXVI-7: Proposal for the establishment of Climate Risk Informed Decision Analysis (CRIDA) as a Flagship Initiative

Decides	to establish Climate Risk Informed Decision Analysis (CRIDA) as a Flagship Initiative under IHP-IX;
Invites	the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the United States of America to identify the (co-)host for the secretariat of the CRIDA Flagship Initiative;
Further invites	the IHP Secretariat to work to seek synergies between CRIDA and the AWARe initiative;
Requests	the IHP Secretariat to assist in the establishment and implementation of the CRIDA Initiative and to report to the 27th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council on the progress achieved in the implementation of the Initiative in line with its strategy and its contribution to IHP-IX;
Calls upon	Member States to actively support the initiative in its development and implementation, consistent with their available technical and financial resources; and
Encourages	all UNESCO Water Family Members and partners to actively engage in the further development and implementation of the CRIDA Initiative.

Actions taken:

13. The CRIDA Flagship Initiative successfully identified a host institution, at the recently established UNESCO Chair on Water and Climate Change at University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio, United States of America, which offered to host the secretariat for the Initiative. Additionally, a new Steering Committee for the CRIDA Flagship Initiative is under development, and a call for nominations was sent to all Member States and UNESCO Water Family Members, and associated partners. The establishment of the Steering Committee

concludes the full alignment of the CRIDA Flagship Initiative to the Flagship Initiatives Framework.

14. To strengthen synergies between CRIDA and the Action for Water Adaptation and Resilience (AWARe) initiative, a joint capacity building workshop was held in Cairo, Egypt, from 16 to 20 June 2025 at the AWARe Pan-African Center for Water and Climate Adaptation (PACWA) and UNESCO Category 2 Centre Regional Training Center for Water Resources and Irrigation (RTCES) to train 30 participants from 11 Member States on the CRIDA methodology, as well as on financing for water resilience projects.

15. Since the establishment of CRIDA as a Flagship Initiative an additional 5 CRIDA cases have been initiated in 5 countries (Ghana, Madagascar, Nepal, Tanzania, Uganda), bringing the total number of CRIDA cases to 30 in 28 Member States. Through the UNESCO Open Learning platform, CRIDA training in English, French and Spanish has reached a total of 17 883 learners so far.

Resolution XXVI-8: Proposal for the establishment of the IAHR Label for Water Training and Education as a Flagship Initiative

Decides	to establish the IAHR Label for Water Training and Education as a Flagship Initiative under IHP-IX;
Requests	the IHP Secretariat to assist in the establishment and implementation of the IAHR Label for Water Training and Education Flagship Initiative and to report to the 27th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council the progress achieved in the implementation of the Flagship Initiative in line with its strategy and its contribution to IHP-IX;
Calls upon	Member States to actively support the Flagship Initiative in its development and implementation, consistent with their available technical and financial resources; and
Encourages	all UNESCO Water Family members and partners to actively engage in the further development and implementation of the IAHR Label for Water Training and Education Flagship Initiative.

Actions taken:

16. The Flagship Initiative on IAHR Label for Water Training and Education endorsed by the Council of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP) in 2024, recognizing excellence in water-related education and training programmes. The initiative hosted by the International Association for Hydro-Environment Engineering and Research (IAHR) with official confirmation communicated to the IHP Secretariat by the Government

of Spain in August 2024 in alignment with Spain's commitment to the Capacity Development Initiative (CDI) and in recognition of its contributions in particular to the UNESCO IHP-IX Priority Area 2: Water Education in the Fourth Industrial Revolution including Sustainability; as well as the SDG6 Global Acceleration Framework focus on Capacity Development.

17. The Label provides international quality assurance for programmes training water professionals, enhancing credibility and global recognition. It is awarded to programmes (not institutions), covering vocational training as well as BSc, MSc and PhD programmes, and is available for programmes taught in any language. Endorsed programmes demonstrate clear learning outcomes, expert-led teaching, fair assessment systems, and alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Label supports the development of skilled water professionals essential for achieving SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation for All) by 2030. To date, 14 Programmes have been awarded the IAHR Label from 2024 until 2026. The IHP Secretariat and IAHR are in close coordination in preparing the strategy outlining its objectives, key activities, and contributions to the IHP-IX implementation.