

Terms of Reference

Programme Committee IWRF 2023

These Terms of Reference apply to the remit of members of the Programme Committee for the International Water Association's (IWA) International Water Regulators Forum (IWRF), a by-invitation-only event that takes place annually during the IWA World Water Congresses and Exhibitions (WWC&E) and the IWA Water and Development Congresses and Exhibitions (WDC&E).

The IWA IWRF gathers high-level representatives of regulatory authorities and officials with regulatory and supervisory functions related to the provision of water, sanitation and wastewater management services. The IWRF facilitates dialogue among regulators across a range of sectoral functions (e.g., economic, health, environmental regulation), aimed at linking science to policy and practice, to enable synergies, peer-to-peer learning and collaboration and inform water-wise policies and regulation.

Successful global IWRF events have taken place since 2014 (Lisbon, 2014, resulting in the IWA Lisbon Charter; London, 2015; Brisbane, 2016; Buenos Aires, 2017; Tokyo, 2018; remote, 2021; and, Copenhagen, 2023). The Forum has also been extended to regions in collaboration with partners and IWA Governing Members: with World Health Organization (WHO) in a thematic version in Palawan, the Philippines at the Global Water Safety Planning Conference in 2016; with Association of Regulators of Water and Sanitation of the Americas (ADERASA) in Guayaquil in 2018 and Cartagena in 2019 at the Inter American Forum of Regulation (FIAR); and during the IWA ASPIRE Conferences in Kuala Lumpur (2017) and Hong Kong SAR (2019) as the Asia-Pacific Water Regulators Forum.

The IWRF connects over 120 regulatory institutions from more than 90 jurisdictions on all continents, becoming a one-of-a-kind global network of regulators proudly hosted by IWA.

The 8th IWRF will be held during the 2023 in Kigali, Rwanda, from December 10 to 14.

Structure of the Forum

In contents and structure, the IWRF aims at creating an interactive and productive space for all participants. Before the Forum, speakers are requested to prepare briefs and key questions to be discussed during the event in the framework of an over-arching theme and various sub-topics. Briefs are disseminated to confirmed participants two weeks prior to the event at the latest. Speakers are also invited to share with all participants any additional or complementary information to strengthen discussions.

Forum discussions are structured around interactive sessions that combine short inspirational presentations and roundtable deliberations led by the speakers and recorded by rapporteurs, usually Young Water Professionals (YWPs). Presentations provide an overall perspective on individual sub-topics and propose general questions to the plenary. Roundtable discussions provide an opportunity for participants and speakers to analyse and discuss in detail each individual sub-topic, share experiences, address proposed questions, and suggest one or more recommendations for consideration by the plenary. The Forum concludes with a plenary session where results of the roundtable discussions are summarised and recommendations are presented for consideration. Additionally, plenary sessions are also an opportunity to invite other key stakeholders to contribute to the discussion and address the interlinkages between regulation and science, policy and practice.

The IWRF is organized as part of one of IWA's key events and forms part of a full programme of activities related to water policies and regulation – including thematic sessions, workshops and training sessions within the Congress' programme.

Roles and responsibilities

The Programme Committee (PC) of the IWRF plays a crucial role in advising the IWA Secretariat on shaping the Forum's agenda, including the over-arching theme, sub-topics, speakers, and overall content. The goal is to create an engaging and valuable experience for all participants.

As 2023 marked a significant milestone in the water sector with the adoption of the Water Action Agenda, following the United Nations (UN) 2023 Water Conference in New York. This outcome prompts us to reflect on our progress and recognize the need for decisive action to address the global water crisis, including from the perspective of regulators. Progress towards the targets set under each of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 6, has been alarmingly slow, and many challenges persist.

Throughout the years, the IWRF has achieved commendable milestones in enhancing regulatory frameworks, promoting safe innovations, and striving for universal access to safe water services. However, we are not without new challenges and increasing pressures on traditional systems and roles. Population growth, rapid urbanization, emerging chemical and pathogens, and the effects of global climate change are all moving goal posts. Therefore, we must shift towards a water security approach rather than relying solely on contingency measures.

The upcoming 8th IWRF will focus on reevaluating the role of regulators and regulations in achieving the SDG Agenda 2030. Building on the success of previous editions, we aim to identify innovative developments and chart a path towards resilient and sustainable universal access to water and sanitation for all. Our Forum will be action-oriented, inclusive, and foster collaboration across sectors. In particular, members of the PC are responsible for:

1. Providing advice to the IWA Secretariat on the overall objectives, theme and expected outcomes for the next edition of the Forum.

2. Proposing and confirming the sub-topics to be covered during the Forum and suggesting key questions for each sub-topic.
3. Proposing potential speakers and panellists.
4. Helping with the design of, approving, and confirming the structure of the Forum.
5. Engaging their respective networks and advice the IWA Secretariat to identify invitees to the Forum so as its participants represent a diverse constituency of regulatory authorities and officials. This constituency must be gender- and age-balanced, inclusive of emerging leaders, have a balanced geographical representation, as well as a range of regulatory models and functions represented. There will also be a balance in the representation from low-, middle- and high-income countries.
6. Providing inputs and feedback to the outcomes report of the Forum, which includes the recommendations and any declaration endorsed by the participants of the Forum during the event.
7. Promoting the IWRF within their own network.

The roles and responsibilities of the PC Chair are the same as those of other members of the PC. Additionally, the Chair is responsible for liaising with local regulatory authorities and officials in the hosting country or territory whenever possible. The Chair is also responsible for welcoming participants at the Forum and will chair the plenary discussions.

Work Allocation and Meetings

Members begin their assignment as soon as they join the PC. Their inputs and feedback are collected via e-mail and online video conferences (such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom or other similar platforms) to facilitate interaction between all members. Before each meeting, the IWA Secretariat sends a suggested agenda and a summary of the previous meeting.

PC meetings are organized taking the suggestions of the PC members into account. On average the IWA Secretariat hosts about 4 meetings online and 1 in-person (at the venue) prior to the event, with the members that attend the event. This is an average of 1 meeting per month. To select the most suitable date and time for all members, they will receive Doodle polls to confirm their availability. In the case where members are in time zones for which it is impossible to hold one meeting for all, the IWA Secretariat will arrange 2 separate meetings for East and West time zones. One consolidated summary of discussions is prepared after the meetings to keep all members of the PC informed of the discussions and their outcomes.

The working language of the meetings is English. The IWA Secretariat facilitates the exchange of information between the members but members are encouraged to also communicate among each other, as long as pertinent issues coming out of these contacts are fed back into the group. Online tools can be used to share information whenever needed.

Composition and selection process

The members of the PC include high-level regulatory authorities and public officials with renowned experience in diverse regulatory functions (e.g., economic, health, environment and quality of service) related to the provision of water, sanitation and wastewater management services.

The number of positions in the PC is variable to accommodate open and pre-defined seats. Pre-defined seats of the PC correspond to the regulatory authorities and public institutions that will host the IWRF in any of its versions. One seat is offered to only one per person per institution.

The Chair of the PC is assigned by the IWA Secretariat and is usually a representative of the regulatory authority or public official in the hosting country or region. If this is not possible, the PC will elect a Chair once fully established (once all open and pre-defined seats have been confirmed).

Eligibility Criteria:

- High-level representative of regulatory authorities or public officials with functions related to the provision of water, sanitation and wastewater management services.
- Renowned experience in at least one of the diverse regulatory functions (economic, health, environment and quality of service) related to the provision of water, sanitation and wastewater management services.
- Ideally an IWA member.

Term

PC members will serve in their role from the moment of their acceptance until the 31st of December of the year in which the Forum takes place.

Resources and acknowledgements

PC members participate on a voluntary basis. Consequently, no remuneration should be expected. They are responsible for any travel, lodging, subsistence and miscellaneous (visa, vaccination, etc) expenses required to attend the event.

All PC members will be acknowledged for their contributions. All documents and results produced by the PC members within their assignment are the exclusive property of IWA; all accounts, data gathered and produced, discs, documents, letters, memoranda, notes, papers, publications, records, reports, samples, tapes and other items provided to or produced by PC members in fulfilling their assignment, shall be and shall remain the property of IWA.