11th WORLD WATER FORUM
RIYADH 2027



Arab Region Concept Note

11th World Water Forum – Riyadh 2027

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Ministry of Environment Water & Agriculture

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Foreword

From drying farmlands and depleting aquifers to rising seas and polluted waterways, the global water crisis is no longer a future concern, it is a present and intensifying reality. Water lies at the heart of food security, public health, resilience, peace, and economic stability. Yet billions still face water extremes such as scarcity and flood risk, contamination, and unequal access.

The 11th World Water Forum, under the overarching theme “Action for a Better Tomorrow”, marks a pivotal moment that promotes dialogue and drives concrete action. It calls on governments, innovators, youth, and communities to move from dialogue to action: scaling solutions, mobilizing financing, and forging inclusive partnerships. This is a global rally to break silos, localize action, and generate lasting impact across every region, river basin, and generation.

As the World Water Forum returns to an Arab country for the first time since 1997, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia offers a uniquely compelling setting: a nation shaped by extreme water scarcity due to its arid conditions, yet one that has emerged as a global leader, uniquely positioned to showcase its expertise in water policies, holistic governance, and efficient water management, including desalination, wastewater treatment, conservation technologies, and innovative water financing through Public-Private Partnerships.

This 11th World Water Forum is dedicated to fostering transformative discussions that move beyond theory to an action-oriented agenda, prioritizing policy implementation, cross-sector collaboration, regional problem-solving, and sustainable development.

As co-hosts, the Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the World Water Council will bring together the human and intellectual capital accumulated across the first ten editions of the World Water Forum and the expertise and experience of the host nation, to guide every track of the 11th World Water Forum toward the best possible outcomes.

The 11th World Water Forum calls on all stakeholders and custodians of water sustainability to unite in this mission, ensuring a water-secure future for generations to come.

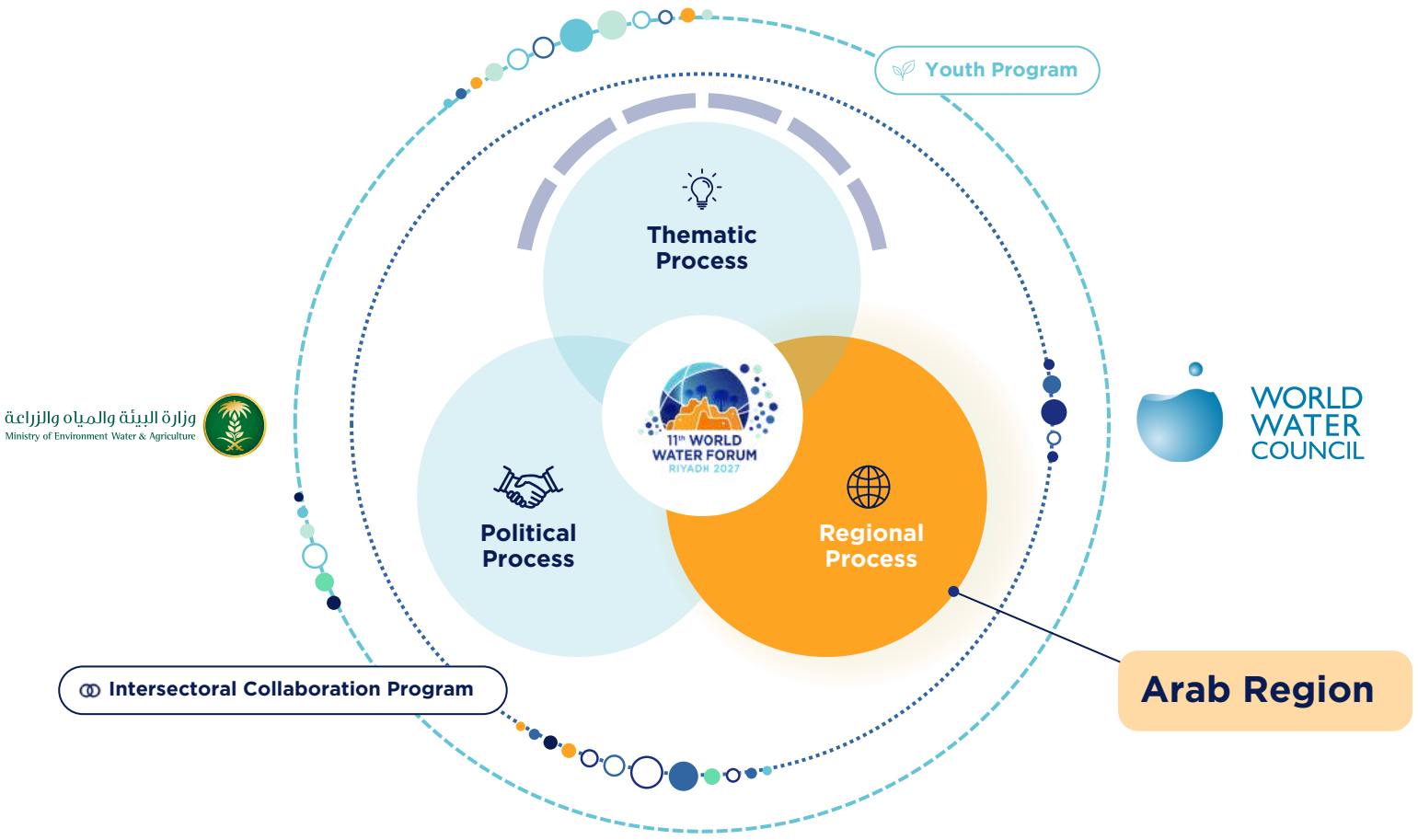
How the Forum Works

One Forum · Three Processes · Two Programs

Held every three years since 1997, the World Water Forum is the largest gathering of the global water community. Its 11th edition takes place in Riyadh from 21 to 25 March 2027 under the theme “Action for a Better Tomorrow”. It is the first Forum hosted in the Gulf, in the year the Forum process turns thirty. It is co-hosted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, through the Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture, and the World Water Council, which launched the Forum and carries its process from one edition to the next.

Three interlinked processes structure the 11th World Water Forum. The Political Process sets policy direction with four segments: Ministerial, Parliamentarian, Local & Regional Authorities, Basin & Watershed Authorities. The Thematic Process, divided into six themes and thirty topics, five per theme, turns technical knowledge into evidence for political commitment. The Regional Process brings regional priorities and solutions into the global agenda. Two programs run across all three: the Youth Program and the Intersectoral Collaboration Program. Each concept note sets out the foundations of one part of this architecture.

This concept note presents the priorities of the Arab Region within the Regional Process and the contribution the region will bring to the 11th World Water Forum.



“Our goal is to create not just a forum for discussion, but a powerful platform for collaboration, innovation, and action.”

Abdulrahman Al Fadley
Minister of Environment, Water and Agriculture

“The 11th World Water Forum must be a platform for action—not just dialogue.”

Loïc Fauchon
President of the World Water Council



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Executive Summary

1 Purpose	To consolidate a unified Arab regional contribution to the 11th World Water Forum, translating shared water challenges and solution pathways into political messages, knowledge products, partnerships, investment opportunities, and post-Forum actions.
2 Strategic Positioning	The Arab region is one of the world's most water-scarce regions, yet it is also a hub of practical experience in desalination, treated wastewater reuse, water diplomacy, climate resilience, and adaptation under scarcity.
3 Headline Priorities	Water scarcity and efficiency; non-conventional water resources; groundwater governance; climate resilience and disaster risk reduction; transboundary water cooperation, fragile, conflict-affected and occupied contexts; WEFE nexus; finance and investment; digital innovation and inclusion.
4 Forum-Facing Deliverables	Arab Water Policy Messages; Arab Water Status Report; Arab Water Actions Portfolio; Arab Knowledge and Data Platform; Arab Regional Pavilion and Showcase; post-Forum follow-up mechanism.
5 Legacy	Institutionalizing the Arab Track as a durable regional platform that feeds into future World Water Forums, UN water processes, SDG 6 implementation, climate adaptation agendas, and Arab regional policy mechanisms.

I. Regional Water Context

INTRODUCTION

The Arab Regional Process for the 11th World Water Forum provides a platform for consolidating a unified Arab contribution to the Forum under the theme “Action for a Better Tomorrow”. It aims to position the Arab region not only as one of the world’s most water-scarce regions, but also as a source of policy, technological, financial and institutional solutions generated through long experience in managing scarcity, climate variability, shared waters, and non-conventional water resources.

The process will strengthen the Arab Track as a coherent regional platform linking the Regional, Thematic and Political Processes of 11th World Water Forum. It will translate Arab priorities into concise policy messages, practical deliverables, investable initiatives, and structured knowledge exchange, while maintaining strong linkages with other regions and global partners.





Rationale and Context

The Arab region comprises 22 countries spanning a geographically diverse area of about 13 million km^2, with climates that are predominantly arid to semi-arid and highly heterogeneous across sub regions (Mediterranean coastal zones, hyper-arid deserts, mountain systems, and limited humid pockets). This structural aridity coincided with rapid socio-economic change: the region hosts nearly 6% of the world's population but has less than 1% of global renewable freshwater resources, making water security a defining development and stability issue and a key constraint on livelihoods, public health, food systems, and ecosystem integrity. (arabwatercouncil.org) Climate risks increasingly intersect with urbanization, poverty, population growth, and conflict/fragility, amplifying exposure and vulnerability, especially in cities and water-stressed rural areas. Water demand management can yet play an easing factor for the challenges in creating socially induced supply-demand balance.

Water scarcity in places, and increased precipitation in others is chronic and intensifying. The region contains 15 of the world's 20 most water-scarce countries, and per-capita water availability is projected to decline further under population growth and climate change. Across the wider MENA context (which closely overlaps the Arab region in aridity and water stress), per-capita water availability is projected to fall below the "absolute scarcity" threshold of 500 m^3/person/year by 2030, underscoring the scale of the structural gap between renewable supply and demand (World Bank).

However, "non-conventional" water resources such as desalinated sea water and the potential use of TSE is not considered in these calculations and deserve a re-consideration since such indices can be mis-read.

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Regional assessments also emphasize that scarcity is not only about low mean availability but about high variability (seasonal and inter annual), increasing uncertainty, and rising costs of reliability pushing countries toward costly supply augmentation (desalination, transfers, deeper groundwater abstraction) while demand continues to rise. (World Bank)

In parallel, SDG-related assessments highlight the human dimension: 90% of the Arab population lived in countries experiencing water scarcity, and 50.8 million people lacked access to basic drinking water services (reported for 2022 conditions), this gives an alarming signal that scarcity is already translating into service delivery and equity challenges. (asdr-2024.unescwa.org)

In the Arab region, agriculture accounts for over 80% of total water withdrawals, making it the primary target for reallocation to meet increasing demands from other sectors.

This shift creates a zero-sum competition for finite resources, directly affecting national food production and increasing reliance on volatile international markets.

As freshwater is diverted away from farms, the resulting decline in agricultural output undermines food security and the socio-economic stability of rural communities. (FAO)

Surface water resources are concentrated in a limited number of major river basin and watersheds and are highly sensitive to climate variability, upstream development, and allocation decisions. The region is also highly dependent on shared and externally sourced water: FAO highlights that over 60% of renewable water resources originate outside national borders for many countries, and that dependence on transboundary groundwater is also significant, raising the stakes for cooperative management and shared risk reduction. (FAO)

Groundwater has become a strategic buffer for cities and agriculture, yet it is widely stressed from over-abstraction, salinization, and quality deterioration (including coastal aquifer salinity risks). (arabwatercouncil.org) Regional and international assessments warn that persistent reliance on unsustainable groundwater withdrawals delays necessary reforms and can trigger long-term loss of strategic reserves and higher future adaptation costs (World Bank).





At the same time, efforts to “close the gap” through non-conventional water are expanding, but they introduce new challenges including energy intensity, brine management, affordability, and governance/ financial sustainability. New technological advancements in renewable energy, zero energy waste water treatment, cross sectoral adaptation of net water positive approaches, offer a new dimension in demand management to further bridge the gap. (World Bank)

Climate change is already altering the region’s hydro-climatic baseline. The Arab region warmed at around 0.43°C per decade (1991–2024) around twice the global average while droughts are becoming more frequent and severe, directly affecting water availability and agriculture.

RICCAR projections estimate a continued rise in temperature reaching 2.6°C in mid-century and 4.8°C towards end of century (RICCAR). Risk is also shifting toward more intense extremes: in 2024, the region recorded 35 extreme weather and climate events, associated with over 300 fatalities and impacts on around 3.77 million people, with floods and flash floods featuring prominently.

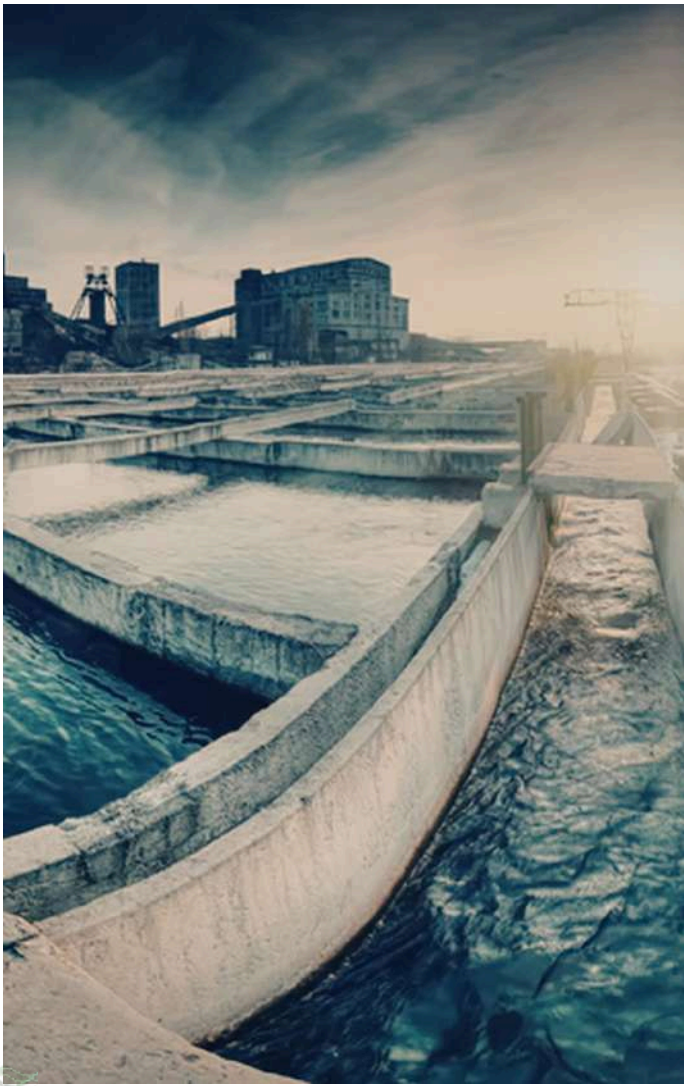
Extreme climate indices projections indicate a sharp rise in the number of extremely hot days exceeding 40 °C across the Arab region through the end of the century.

Consecutive dry days are also expected to increase, though at a more moderate pace (RICCAR). Extreme events, increasing temperatures and rainfall variability are having direct impacts on local food production and agricultural productivity, thus threatening food security, especially for the poor and vulnerable segment of the population. Coastal risks compound water insecurity through sea-level rise and salinity pressures, including along deltas and low-lying coastal zones. While early warning coverage is improving, only 59% of Arab countries reported Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems as of March 2024, and large disparities in capacity and last-mile effectiveness remain highlighting the need for scaled resilience investment, preparedness, and risk-informed water planning on both local and regional levels.



Shared waters are central to the region's security and cooperation agenda: externally sourced river flows and transboundary rivers and aquifers underpin national water balances in many states, creating shared exposure to climate variability, upstream infrastructure, unagreed upon and competing sectoral demands (FAOHome).

Improving transboundary water cooperation across the region is necessary to ensure the sustainable and equitable integrated management of transboundary basins through coordinated efforts, including data sharing, legal reform, institutional development and financial mobilization (ESCWA).



The IWRM midterm assessment for the Arab region underscores the importance of strengthening transboundary and national water governance simultaneously, recommending that countries prioritize IWRM at regional (transboundary), national, and subnational levels and better integrate water into climate planning (including National Adaptation Plans). (ESCWA) For the 11th World Water Forum Arab regional process, this context reinforces the need to frame discussions around inclusive transboundary cooperation, risk sharing, benefit-sharing, data transparency, and investment alignment across shared basins and aquifers, alongside strengthened national reforms. (ESCWA).

The policies of upstream states play a pivotal role in aggravating the water scarcity crisis in the Arab region, where Arab countries depend on international rivers originating outside their territories for more than 60% of their freshwater resources. Unilateral actions concerning the development of irrigation projects-driven by upstream states' strategies to construct large dams and massive irrigation schemes without prior coordination with downstream countries (e.g., the current situation in the Tigris, Euphrates, and Nile basin) contribute significantly to the worsening water crisis. These actions result in the reduction of historical water quotas and the alteration of the rivers' hydrological systems.

On another level, the impact of these policies is not limited to water quantity alone; but also extend to water quality due to discharge of agricultural and industrial waste into river courses degrades the water quality, leading to increased salinity and pollution levels in Arab downstream territories.

Consequently, the persistence of upstream states in prioritizing national interests over the principles of international law places Arab national security in the face of existential challenges. This reality necessitates intensified diplomatic and legal action to ensure the sustainability of life and development.



In parts of the Arab region affected by land occupation, water security is shaped not only by hydrology and upstream downstream interdependence, but also by asymmetric control over water resources, infrastructure, and permitting, with direct implications for equity, human rights, and stability. UN reporting documents that, since 1967, water resources in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) have been placed under Israeli control, with restrictions that require permits for constructing or maintaining water installations and that constrain access to key sources including reported limitations on Palestinian access to the Jordan River and control over most extraction and distribution systems. (ecosoc.un.org)

These constraints translate into persistent service deficits and heightened vulnerability, including in crisis settings. In 2021, the daily per-capita domestic water consumption in the oPt was reported at 86.3 litres/capita/day (89.0 in the West Bank and 82.7 in Gaza), while Israeli per-capita allocation was reported to be around 300 litres/day and more than seven times higher for Israeli settlers; the same UN report highlights that restrictions on construction in Area C, demolition risks for WASH assets, and barriers to accessing sources continue to undermine WASH outcomes, and notes that 1.4 million Palestinians were in need of humanitarian support to improve access to safe drinking water.

It also reports that 96% of water from Gaza's sole aquifer is unfit for human consumption, while closures and constraints delay essential inputs needed for repairs and rehabilitation of water networks and desalination systems. (ecosoc.un.org).

With the current situation and since October 2023, the war in Gaza has caused a catastrophic water crisis, with 96% of households lacking sufficient, safe water, and 67% of water/sanitation infrastructure damaged or destroyed. Over 1.9 million people are displaced, facing severe shortages and relying on contaminated sources, leading to a 36-fold increase in diarrhea cases and 384-fold rise in jaundice.



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Key impacts include:

- **Infrastructure Destruction:** Repeated attacks on pipes, wells, and desalination plants have paralyzed water supply
- **Drastic Shortages:** Average water consumption has dropped to 3 liters per person daily well below the 15-liter emergency threshold
- **Severe Health Crisis:** Consumption of contaminated, salty water and lack of sanitation have caused outbreaks of infectious diseases, including hepatitis A and skin infection
- **Weaponization of Resources:** The siege, including restrictions on fuel for pumping stations and sewage treatment, has weaponized water access
- **Environmental Devastation:** total water supply and sewage treatment failure has likely caused permanent contamination of the aquifer



The humanitarian situation is critical, with over 500,000 people facing famine, and the destruction of over 75% of buildings making basic life and survival almost impossible.

In line with this important and alarming status in Gaza, and in line with the Arab Water Council's mission to advance its goals and vision and to strengthen regional cooperation and shared water security, the Council issued a statement on "Water for Peace in Gaza" in November 2025, titled "Water for Peace: Rebuilding Gaza, Strengthening Trust, Reviving Hope, and Restoring Life."







The initiative sets out a practical pathway to translate this vision into action through three integrated phases, and calls on neighboring countries, regional organizations, development partners, and international institutions to unite around a shared humanitarian purpose: rebuilding Gaza's water systems sustainably, affirming access to water as a fundamental human right, and positioning water as a bridge for peace, security, and prosperity across the Arab region, through Phase One: Solidarity and Emergency Action (Water for Survival), Phase Two: Recovery and Sustainable Reconstruction (Water for Development), and Phase Three: Regional Cooperation and Water Security (Water for Peace).

The challenge extends beyond Palestine. UN reporting on natural resources also documents discriminatory water allocations in the occupied Syrian Golan, including large disparities between allocations to Israeli and Syrian farmers and higher effective costs borne by Syrian farmer associations when purchasing water. (ecosoc.un.org)

These structural constraints are compounded by recurrent damage to water infrastructure and supply interruptions in affected communities; for example, OCHA has reported incidents of water connections being destroyed and major supply reductions affecting hundreds of thousands in parts of the West Bank, with emergency measures (water trucking, tanks, repair kits) only partially alleviating needs. (ochaopt.org)

After more than 14 years of armed conflict and harsh conditions, Syrian Arab Republic is suffering from an unprecedented deterioration in its water and sanitation infrastructure. It is estimated that over 60% of the transport and distribution networks have been destroyed, and the conflict has inflicted direct physical damage to infrastructure amounting to $52 billion, making the infrastructure sector the most affected, accounting for 48% of the total damage.

This has led to a sharp decline in the efficiency of services, with less than 50% of the water infrastructure now functioning efficiently, leaving 14.4 million people in the country in dire need of water and sanitation services. Rehabilitating this vital infrastructure and restoring the institutional capacity to manage water resources sustainably and equitably is an urgent humanitarian and development priority.





Therefore, the Arab Regional Process emphasizes the need to support, Syrian Arab Republic in its recovery efforts in the water sector, rehabilitate damaged infrastructure, and ensure access to essential services for all Syrians, as an integral part of Arab water security and regional stability.

Accordingly, the 11th World Water Forum Arab regional process should explicitly address “water not a tool for pressure” as a core regional water security concern linking water diplomacy with international humanitarian law and the human right to water and sanitation, and advancing solution pathways that (i) protect civilian water and wastewater infrastructure and ensure safe, sustained humanitarian access to fuel, spare parts, and repair works; (ii) reduce asymmetric risks through transparent monitoring and accountability around allocations, service impacts, and infrastructure damage; and (iii) enable investable recovery and resilience packages (WASH rehabilitation, wastewater treatment, aquifer protection, and appropriate desalination/renewables integration) that are technically sound but also feasible under the prevailing access and governance constraints. (ecosoc.un.org).



Water Security in Shared, Fragile, Conflict-Affected and Occupied Contexts

Shared waters are central to Arab water security. Many Arab countries depend on transboundary rivers, basins and aquifers, including water resources originating outside their territories. The Arab Regional Process will therefore frame transboundary water management around cooperative governance, prior notification, no significant harm, equitable and reasonable utilization, data transparency, joint monitoring, benefit-sharing and dispute-prevention mechanisms.

In fragile, conflict-affected and occupied contexts, water security is shaped not only by hydrology and climate variability, but also by infrastructure damage, displacement, asymmetric control over water resources, restricted access, and weakened institutions. In these settings, access to safe water and sanitation is a humanitarian, development and stability priority.

The situation in Gaza and other affected areas should be addressed through a recovery-oriented lens that emphasizes protection of civilian water and wastewater infrastructure, sustained humanitarian access, emergency water supply, rehabilitation of damaged networks, aquifer protection, renewable-energy-supported desalination and wastewater treatment, and long-term institutional recovery.

Accordingly, the Arab Regional Process should advance the principle that water must not be used as a tool of pressure. This priority will be presented within the broader framework of water diplomacy, international law, human rights, reconstruction finance, climate resilience and regional cooperation.

KEY DRIVERS AND SYSTEMIC PRESSURES SHAPING WATER SECURITY

1 Hydro-climatic variability and increasing climate uncertainty

- Accelerating warming (≈0.43°C/decade since 1991) and increasing drought severity are reducing reliability of surface and groundwater recharge and raising irrigation risks.
- Rising frequency/intensity of extreme events and floods (e.g., 35 events in 2024, >300 fatalities, ~3.77 million affected) is stressing dams, drainage, water networks, and emergency response systems.
- Coastal exposure and coastal zones under risk (sea-level rise trends around the region) heightens salinity threats and protection costs for deltas and coastal aquifers.

2 Demographic and economic transitions

- Continued population growth, rapid urbanization, and changing consumption patterns are intensifying municipal, industrial, and agricultural demand in already water-scarce settings.
- Per-capita availability is projected to fall below 500 m^3/person/year by 2030 in the broader regional context, implying deeper trade-offs between food systems, cities, and ecosystems. (World Bank)
- By 2066, all 22 Arab states are expected to experience water scarcity, and 17 of them will face absolute scarcity. (ESCWA) Increasing reliance on supply augmentation and "virtual water" (food imports) can reduce immediate pressure but increases fiscal exposure, energy dependence, and vulnerability to external shocks. (World Bank).
- Food security is a strategic socio-economic concern across the Arab Region, where limited arable land, high climate sensitivity of agriculture, and heavy reliance on food imports intersect with chronic water scarcity. Agriculture remains the largest water-using sector in most countries and a key source of rural livelihoods and employment, making water availability, efficiency, and resilience central to food-security strategies, social stability, and economic development.
- Geo-Political instability, forced displacement and conflict disrupt water services, damage infrastructure and hinder regional cooperation. In some contexts, water is used as a tool of power, deepening inequalities and igniting more tensions.
- Linking water law to economic stability and security: Effective basin institutions and dispute-resolution mechanisms are critical to protect food security, infrastructure investments, and regional stability. Modern shared-water governance is a foundation for sustainable development and geopolitical resilience.

3 Governance structures, institutional capacity, and financing constraints

- Regional IWRM implementation and progress is decelerating; the financing dimension is the weakest compared to other IWRM dimensions, reflecting persistent gaps in sustainable funding and execution capacity. (ESCWA and UNEP-DHI)
- SDG implementation, financing gaps, and uneven monitoring progress toward SDG 6 remains uneven: while the region has reached ~89% access to basic drinking water services (2022), major disparities persist (notably in low-income and fragile contexts) and tens of millions still lack basic WASH services giving a signal that implementation is off-track in parts of the region. (ESCWA)
- Resource constraints are reinforcing this gap: official development assistance for water and sanitation declined by ~34% (2015–2021), while persistent data and reporting gaps limit SDG tracking, targeting, and accountability. (asdr-2024.unescwa.org)
- Predominantly centralized allocation and technocratic control can limit the ability to resolve local trade-offs; limited autonomy and weak accountability can constrain reform, especially around demand management and service performance. (World Bank)
- Service delivery constraints include high losses and under-recovery: the World Bank notes that many utilities report >30% non-revenue water due to leaks, metering issues, and illegal connections, reducing reliability and undermining financial sustainability. (World Bank)
- Conflict and fragility compound institutional and infrastructure stress, affecting equity outcomes and making cooperation, resilience finance, and risk-informed planning more urgent. (ESCWA and UNEP-DHI).
- Strengthening legal frameworks for shared waters: Demographic growth and rising demand require structured, rules-based cooperation over transboundary rivers, basins, and aquifers. Agreements must reflect principles of equitable utilization, no significant harm, prior notification, and data transparency to reduce systemic risk and prevent disputes.
- Modernizing transboundary groundwater governance: Shared aquifers remain weakly regulated compared to surface waters. Harmonized abstraction controls, joint monitoring systems, and climate-adaptive treaty provisions are essential to prevent depletion, salinization, and long-term strategic loss.

II. Key Regional Issues, Opportunities and Priorities

Key Challenges

Consolidated Headline Priorities for the Arab Regional Process:

- Water scarcity, demand management and water-use efficiency.
- Non-conventional water resources and circular water economy.
- Groundwater governance, abstraction control and managed aquifer recharge.
- Climate resilience, drought/flood risk management, salinity and early warning.
- Transboundary water cooperation, shared aquifers and water diplomacy.
- WEFE nexus, resilient infrastructure and nature-based water solutions.
- Digital water, data governance, artificial intelligence and innovation.
- Governance, sustainable finance, capacity development and social inclusion.



The detailed priorities are:

1. Water scarcity and demand management.
Ensuring equitable and efficient allocation among competing sectors (drinking water, agriculture, industry, ecosystems) and among users (urban and rural) while accounting for climate uncertainty and demographic growth.

2. Groundwater Management and Recharge
Groundwater is a vital water source in the Arab region, often exceeding 50% to 80% of total freshwater use in several countries. While estimates vary based on whether they include non-renewable, fossil water or renewable resources. There is a need for regulatory enforcement, digital aquifer modeling and monitoring platforms, and policy instruments for abstraction control.

Groundwater recharge in Arab regions faces significant hurdles including limited rainfall, substantial evaporation, and varied geological conditions. To address these challenges, several solutions are proposed, such as Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR), which involves injecting desalinated water into wells during periods of abundance for later recovery during high demand. Other strategies include constructing recharge dams in wadis and developing rainwater harvesting wells in areas prone to waterlogging.

3. Water quality, sanitation and ecosystem degradation.
Protecting surface and groundwater water quality, expanding safely managed sanitation and wastewater treatment, controlling pollution and rehabilitating degraded ecosystems such as wetlands and oases. Adoption of Sanitation Safety Planning (SSP) provides a systematic framework for managing health risks along the entire sanitation chain, ensuring that the use of treated wastewater in agriculture is safe for both farmers and consumers.



By identifying and mitigating potential hazards before they occur, SSP builds institutional and public confidence in the circular water economy, transforming treated wastewater into a reliable, high-value resource for resilient agri-food systems.

4. Disaster risk reduction and climate resilience

Enhancing preparedness for droughts, floods and seawater intrusion, investing in resilient infrastructure and nature-based solutions, and integrating water-climate action into national adaptation plans. Fostering Public-Private Partnerships. Encouraging and facilitate the full engagement of civil society organizations and communities. Collaborate with the private sector to finance and implement disaster risk reduction and climate resilience projects become a necessity at national level.

Develop early warning systems for droughts, floods and seawater intrusion. Generate floodplain mapping and update periodically and implement effective floodplain management strategy. “Salinity should also be recognized as a climate-amplified resilience challenge in the Arab region, with implications for water security, food systems, groundwater sustainability, and vulnerable coastal infrastructure.”

5. Transboundary and shared water management

Strengthening water diplomacy, data sharing and capacity development activities, negotiating inclusive sustainable agreements for shared rivers and aquifers, and preventing conflict through benefit-sharing and cooperation that is consistent with applicable international water law; and safeguarding human water rights and access in situations of occupation and prolonged conflict in accordance with international law. Recommend to include a Combined/joined watershed management along the transboundary and shared watershed.

6. Non-conventional water resources (NCWR)

Scaling up desalination powered by renewable energy, wastewater treatment and reuse, rainwater harvesting and managed aquifer recharge, while minimizing environmental footprint and ensuring affordability.

Proper renewable energy (solar power) integration and brine management will nullify or minimize the impacts on the environment. This could be further supported through a regional initiative on salinity and biosaline resilience, including salinity risk mapping, shared monitoring protocols, guidance for saline water reuse, and exchange of knowledge on drainage, soil rehabilitation, and biosaline practices.”

7. Digitalization, innovation and data
Harnessing artificial intelligence (AI), remote sensing, Data centers and data sets digital platforms for water monitoring, forecasting, leak detection and decision support; bridging data gaps and promoting open-access information systems. Implement sustainable cooling strategies for data centers, prioritizing recycled water, non-conventional sources, and water-efficient technologies to minimize freshwater withdrawals. It is also important to adopt innovative & advanced technological solutions to transition towards a smart built environment as well as continuing investment in water leak detection technology and equipment to quickly identify system leakages. Electronic documentation of all the available historical data regarding water related themes and establishment of a centralized database that encompasses all groundwater wells and periodically enhances data updates.

8. Governance and institutional capacity
Addressing fragmentation, empowering local authorities and water users' associations, building regulatory frameworks for NCWR and groundwater, and enhancing human capacity (particularly women and youth) in the water sector, strengthening local governance and decentralizing decision-making can help improve service delivery, and fostering multi-stakeholder platforms, to promote dialogue among government, civil society, and private sector stakeholders to address governance challenges.

9. Strengthening Structured Institutional Frameworks and Clear Governance Hierarchies
Effective water security requires countries to establish structured institutional frameworks with clearly defined mandates, hierarchical coordination mechanisms, and accountability structures across national, basin, and local levels. Clarifying roles between ministries, regulators, utilities, basin authorities, and groundwater agencies reduces fragmentation, duplication, and policy inconsistency.

A well-defined governance hierarchy supported by regulatory independence, technical capacity, financial transparency, and performance monitoring enhances decision-making efficiency, improves service delivery, and strengthens crisis response. Institutional coherence is particularly critical for managing transboundary waters, groundwater abstraction control, climate adaptation planning, and agreed upon large-scale infrastructure investments.

10. Developing Future Leaders in Water Diplomacy and Strategic Planning
Despite infrastructure progress, accelerated capacity strengthening across the water sector is urgently required. Empowering institutions, utilities, regulators, and local actors with the necessary technical, financial, and governance capabilities is essential to respond effectively to escalating water insecurity and to sustain water security efforts at local, national, and regional scales.

This includes **the preparing the next generation of** water leaders is essential to address emerging geopolitical, climate, and technological challenges. Countries must invest in structured capacity-building programs that equip young professionals with expertise in water diplomacy, transboundary negotiation, strategic planning, climate-risk management, and integrated resource governance. This includes strengthening technical proficiency in digital tools, AI applications, hydro-informatics, and data analytics, while also building negotiation skills, institutional leadership capacity, and policy design competencies. Empowering youth and future decision-makers ensures continuity, innovation, and resilience in managing shared water resources and complex water–energy–food–ecosystem interdependencies.

11. Water-energy–food–ecosystems (WEFE) nexus

Promoting integrated planning and investment that recognizes interdependencies among water, food, energy and ecosystems; advancing renewable-energy solutions (solar, wind, green hydrogen) to reduce the carbon footprint of water services.

Addressing the differentiated water needs of agriculture, industry, and domestic sectors requires equitable allocation mechanisms that balance volumetric demand with socio-economic value and ecosystem safeguards. This also entails ensuring that the quality of output water particularly treated wastewater and process effluents meets fit-for-purpose standards to enable safe recycling and reuse across sectors. By linking efficiency with water-quality management and circular reuse pathways, countries can enhance resource productivity, reduce abstraction pressures, and operationalize the WEFE nexus in practice.This requires strengthened cross-sectoral policy coherence across local, basin, national and regional scales, enabling coordinated political action and the practical implementation of water-nexus solutions through aligned governance frameworks, integrated financing, and shared accountability mechanisms.



12. Financing and investment
Mobilizing global, public and private finance for infrastructure, innovation and maintenance; integrating climate finance, as well as blended finance; facilitating exposure to innovative support and financing modalities aimed at strengthening sustainable development and reinforcing local resilience; providing targeted and flexible financial support for countries facing prolonged conflicts and fragile contexts; ensuring cost recovery while protecting vulnerable users.

13. Social inclusion and solidarity
Engaging women, youth, refugees and rural communities as partners; recognizing water as a human right; and ensuring that regional solidarity underpins technical cooperation and resource sharing.

14. Unity and collaboration and shared projects among Arab countries
Strengthening relations through treaties and exchange of expertise, knowledge as well as resources both physical and human through trainings, education, scholarships, aid and grants, inclusion of the weak, poor and oppressed countries incapable both with the knowledge and the finances and human and physical resources either from infrastructure or basic needs of clean for human use and agriculture





15. Circular Economy Approaches (water reuse & recycling)
A key challenge in the Arab region is scaling safe, fit-for-purpose water reuse and circular resource recovery (e.g., treated wastewater for agriculture/industry, greywater reuse, and nutrient/energy recovery from sludge) amid gaps in treatment capacity, quality standards, monitoring and enforcement, and public acceptance.

Weak incentives and fragmented governance often limit uptake, especially where tariffs for services, permitting, and utility business models do not reward efficiency, while operational risks (salinity, emerging contaminants, network leakage, and brine management) can undermine reliability and environmental safeguards. Innovative solutions for brine management are also required to protect the environment.

Linking water law to economic stability and security: Effective basin institutions and dispute-resolution mechanisms are critical to protect food security, infrastructure investments, and regional stability. Modern shared-water governance is a foundation for sustainable development and geopolitical resilience.

16. Citizen Science Initiatives.
Citizen science can strengthen early warning and local monitoring (e.g., reporting leaks, illegal discharges, algal blooms, coastal pollution, and well salinity), but the region faces challenges in data quality assurance, standardized protocols, sustained engagement, and integration of community data into official decision systems.

Digital divides, trust and transparency concerns, and unclear roles/responsibilities between communities, utilities, and regulators can limit impact unless programs include training, simple tools/apps, validation methods, and clear pathways for acting on reported observations.

17. Resilient Nature Based Water Solutions (RNBWS)
Resilient Nature-Based Water Solutions (RNBWS) aspire to enhance agricultural productivity, sustainable management of water resources, promote inclusive economic empowerment, and build climate resilience across vulnerable rural communities by bundling context-appropriate technical and institutional solutions. These include a range of biophysical interventions, such as solar-powered irrigation systems, natural soil salinity treatment measures, laser land leveling and improved subsurface drainage systems.

RNBWS respond to the needs of small-scale farmers who are most vulnerable to the impacts of water scarcity, climate change and land degradation. Develop and implement an integrated demand and supply management program for water resources for each country and establishment of common KPI(s) between different countries. Biosaline agriculture can also be considered, where appropriate, as a climate adaptation approach that helps turn saline water and salt-affected lands into productive resources for more resilient agri-food systems.

18. Improving Water Use Efficiency and Reducing System Losses

Enhancing irrigation efficiency and water productivity is central to addressing water scarcity in the Arab region, where agriculture remains the largest water-consuming sector. Improving conveyance systems, promoting precision irrigation, and shifting toward higher-value, climate-resilient cropping systems can generate significant water savings while sustaining food security and rural livelihoods.

At the same time, reducing non-revenue water through leakage control, pressure management, metering, and improved utility governance offers one of the most immediate and cost-effective opportunities to recover lost water.

Addressing inefficiencies both on-farm and within urban supply networks can collectively unlock substantial volumes, contributing meaningfully to closing the region's water deficit across local, national, and basin scales.



Proposed regional priorities and guiding questions

These proposed regional priorities and questions are linked to all the 11th World Water Forum themes "Water Security", "Water Finance", "Water for People and Ecosystems", "Water Governance and Diplomacy", "Innovation for Water Management" and "Value of Water", where all the themes are directly affecting the Arab region and the regional process should reflect on all of the themes:

Enhancing Water use efficiency:
How can countries move beyond pilot efficiency projects toward systemic, basin-scale transformation? What governance and financing mechanisms are required to incentivize real water savings rather than apparent efficiency gains? How can cross-sectoral coordination be institutionalized to align efficiency targets with broader water security, food security, and climate resilience objectives?

1

Sustainable NCWR management:
How can NCWR be integrated into national water budgets and basin allocation frameworks? What regulatory, financial, and energy transition mechanisms are needed to scale NCWR sustainably, while minimizing carbon footprint and ensuring cost recovery? What enabling conditions (such as social acceptance, adapted business models, tariff structures, and private-sector engagement) are required to make NCWR investments socially viable, financially sustainable, and politically supported?

2

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Climate change and disaster risk management.
Use expected climate scenarios and integrating climate change into water and agricultural planning and policy. What integrated strategies can build resilience to droughts, floods and sea-level rise? How can green infrastructure and early warning systems be scaled up? How can access to climate finance by countries most affected by climate change in the Arab region be enhanced? How can climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction measures be systematically embedded into water governance frameworks, infrastructure planning, and investment priorities to enhance long-term resilience and reduce vulnerability?

3

Transboundary cooperation and water diplomacy.
What mechanisms have been most effective in fostering transboundary cooperation and promoting the sustainable management that can strengthen cooperation in shared river basins and aquifers? How can regional diplomacy contribute to peace eliminating conflicts, benefit-sharing mechanisms, and strengthening inclusive water governance? What institutional, regulatory, and technological measures can be strengthened to improve the monitoring, control, and enforcement of groundwater abstraction, particularly in overexploited transboundary aquifers? How can we foster regional cooperation and knowledge sharing to address common water challenges?

4

WEFE nexus and renewable energy.
How can integrated planning optimise water use in agriculture, energy production and ecosystems? What role can solar, wind and green hydrogen play in reducing water footprints?

5

Integrated water resources management (IWRM).
Promotion of integrated water resources management help address water scarcity and quality and climate resilience challenges. How can we promote sustainable water management practices to address water scarcity, quality and resilience challenges?

6

Digital and innovative solutions. 7
How can AI, big data and remote sensing improve water monitoring, demand management, leak detection, early warning systems and flood forecasting? What regulatory and capacity conditions are required to adopt digital water solutions?

Governance, finance and inclusion. 8
How can institutional reforms strengthen coordination among sectors and levels of government? What financing models can accelerate investment in water infrastructure and innovation? How can women, youth, refugees and vulnerable groups be empowered as actors in water governance? How can Arab countries mobilize and diversify sustainable financing sources (public, private, blended, and climate finance) to bridge the growing investment gap in the water sector?
In what ways can inclusivity and conflict-sensitive water sector investments serve as entry points for peacebuilding, institutional stabilization, and the promotion of social cohesion in fragile settings?

Water infrastructure development. 9
Developing and maintaining water infrastructure to support economic growth and human development. What are the priority water infrastructure investments needed to support economic growth and human development?

Value of water and socio-economic transformation. 10
How can the economic, social and environmental value of water be recognized in policy and practice? What role can circular economy, green jobs and education play in transforming water management?

Mainstreaming Resilient Nature-Based Water Solutions (RNBWS) into National Policy Frameworks. 11
How can Resilient Nature-Based Water Solutions (RNBWS) be effectively integrated into national policies to simultaneously enhance water and food security, promote environmental conservation, and sustain the socio-economic well-being of local communities?

Country-Specific Questions: 12
How can we improve water service delivery and management in urban areas? What are the priority water infrastructure investments needed to support agricultural development? How can we enhance water security and climate resilience in rural areas?

III. Expected Outcomes and Deliverables

The Arab Regional Process will present the following concrete outputs to 11th World Water Forum and its preparatory process:

- Arab Water Policy Messages for 11th World Water Forum: A concise set of political and technical messages reflecting Arab priorities on scarcity, NCWR, climate resilience, transboundary cooperation, water under fragile and occupied contexts, finance, innovation and inclusion.
- Arab Water Status Report 2026/2027: A regional evidence product synthesizing water stress, service reliability, climate risks, groundwater pressures, finance gaps and solution pathways, supported by country snapshots and case studies.
- Arab Water Actions Portfolio: A portfolio of investable initiatives and partnership opportunities covering water efficiency, reuse, desalination, NRW reduction, groundwater monitoring, early warning, WASH recovery and WEFE nexus projects.
- Arab Knowledge and Data Platform: A bilingual platform for knowledge exchange, policy briefs, dashboards, case studies, partner mapping and post-Forum follow-up.



- Arab Regional Pavilion and Showcase at 11th World Water Forum: A high-visibility exhibition and session package presenting Arab solutions, innovations, financing opportunities and policy messages.
- Regional Initiative on NCWR and Salinity Resilience: A flagship initiative on desalination, treated wastewater reuse, brine management, salinity mapping, biosaline agriculture and renewable energy integration.
- Arab Water Diplomacy and Shared Waters Dialogue: A structured dialogue on shared rivers, aquifers, data transparency, legal principles, cooperation mechanisms and benefit-sharing.
- Post-Forum Arab Water Actions Review: An annual follow-up mechanism to track commitments, partnerships, financing and implementation after 11th World Water Forum.



The Arab regional Process Produce, in the context of Riyadh 11th World Water Forum a strategic direction to form a blue book for the collective Arab region efforts. A recent benchmark is the European Water Resilience Strategy, (https://commission.europa.eu/topics/environment/water-resilience-strategy_en) The Arab Regional Process will generate a strategic direction for collective Arab water action, serving as a foundation for a future Arab Water Resilience agenda and a living portfolio of regional initiatives to be advanced toward 11th World Water Forum, 12th World Water Forum and related global processes.

The Arab Regional Process will generate the strategy of outcomes and deliverables structured under five interlinked categories, aligned with the Regional Framework and shaped by the region's core priorities: water scarcity and service reliability, non-conventional water resources (NCWR), climate resilience and water-related disaster risk reduction, transboundary cooperation and water diplomacy (including water under occupation), sustainable financing and governance reform, and digital transformation and innovation, while ensuring equity, inclusion, youth and women's leadership, and protection of ecosystems.

1. Policy and Strategic Outcomes

The Arab process will consolidate a unified regional voice and translate it into strategic, implementable policy direction for 11th World Water Forum. Key outcomes will include:

1 Formal advancement of the “Arab Track” within the World Water Council (WWC) as a recognized geographical region, strengthening the region’s collective representation and coordination.

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2 A concise and high-impact set of “Arab Water Policy Messages for 11th World Water Forum” will be developed through a structured pathway from technical design groups and consultative meetings before the forum. The messages will then be reviewed and endorsed by the League of Arab States (LAS), and formally announced by LAS during the 7th Arab Water Forum (AWF7, 2026) in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on the margins of the 1st Saudi Water Week, addressing priority themes such as “scarcity and demand management”, “NCWR governance and safeguards”, “climate adaptation and resilience”, “WEFE linkages”, “transboundary cooperation and benefit-sharing”, “water under occupation and equitable access”, “financing and affordability”, and “digital innovation” for performance and accountability.

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3 The process will also provide harmonized “inputs into political declarations and high-level commitments”, including strengthened commitments to “the human right to water and sanitation”, resilient and inclusive, transboundary governance, protection of water infrastructure, and sustainable financing frameworks. Where applicable, the process will generate “guidance for regional water legislation and policy alignment”, including regulatory readiness for reuse, desalination, groundwater governance, drought/flood risk management, data governance, and PPP frameworks.

2. Technical and Knowledge Deliverables

1. The process will produce an evidence-based knowledge package that documents the region's water realities, solution pathways, and priority investment needs.

2. A flagship "Arab Water Status Report (2026)" will synthesize regional assessments, stressors, and response options, supported by country snapshots, and case studies that capture diverse contexts (Gulf, Maghreb, Mashreq, Nile Basin, fragile and conflict-affected settings).

3. The process will develop a suite of "thematic policy briefs and technical notes" for example on NCWR (reuse, desalination, MAR), groundwater governance, transboundary and shared water resources management (including aquifers and shared basins, water diplomacy tools, benefit-sharing approaches, and cooperation under fragile and conflict-affected contexts), and flood risk management, climate services and early warning, water quality and pollution control, green water management and rainfed agriculture optimization, and water footprint assessment (including blue, green, and grey water components, digital water and utility performance, and WEFE nexus investment design.

4. A dedicated "knowledge platform" will be established to support continuous learning, transparency, peer exchange, and the regional showcase at 11th World Water Forum, with bilingual accessibility (Arabic/English) and content tailored for policymakers, practitioners, youth, and investors.

5. A Capacity Development Alliance among regional training centers, universities, and professional institutions will design joint training programs and professional certification schemes for water sector practitioners.

3. Partnerships and Financing Outcomes

1 A core outcome of the process is to convert priorities into actionable partnerships and investable pipelines.

2 The “Regional Process Committee and Extended Partners Committee” will be operationalized with clear governance arrangements, sub-regional focal points, design groups, and a structured stakeholder engagement mechanism that includes governments, utilities, regulators, river basin institutions, civil society, academia, private sector, youth, and women leaders.

3 The process will strengthen engagement with development banks, climate funds, donors, and regional financial institutions, building a shared understanding of priority financing gaps and investment readiness needs, explore risk-sharing tools, and pooled regional investment facilities to improve bankability of water projects.

4 It will advance “public–private partnership initiatives” and a practical “innovation-to-implementation” agenda by co-designing pilots and partnerships (with MoUs where appropriate) around regionally relevant solutions



5 Developing specialized technical expertise in water finance to prepare bankable project proposals that comply with the requirements of diverse funding institutions and effectively secure sustainable financing.

6 A regional framework for responsible private sector engagement will be developed, including guiding principles, matchmaking opportunities, and support tools for structuring sustainable public-private partnerships.

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4. Actions and Initiatives for Implementation

1. The Arab Regional Process will be sustained through a clear sequence of milestones that build momentum and culminate in tangible implementation commitments.

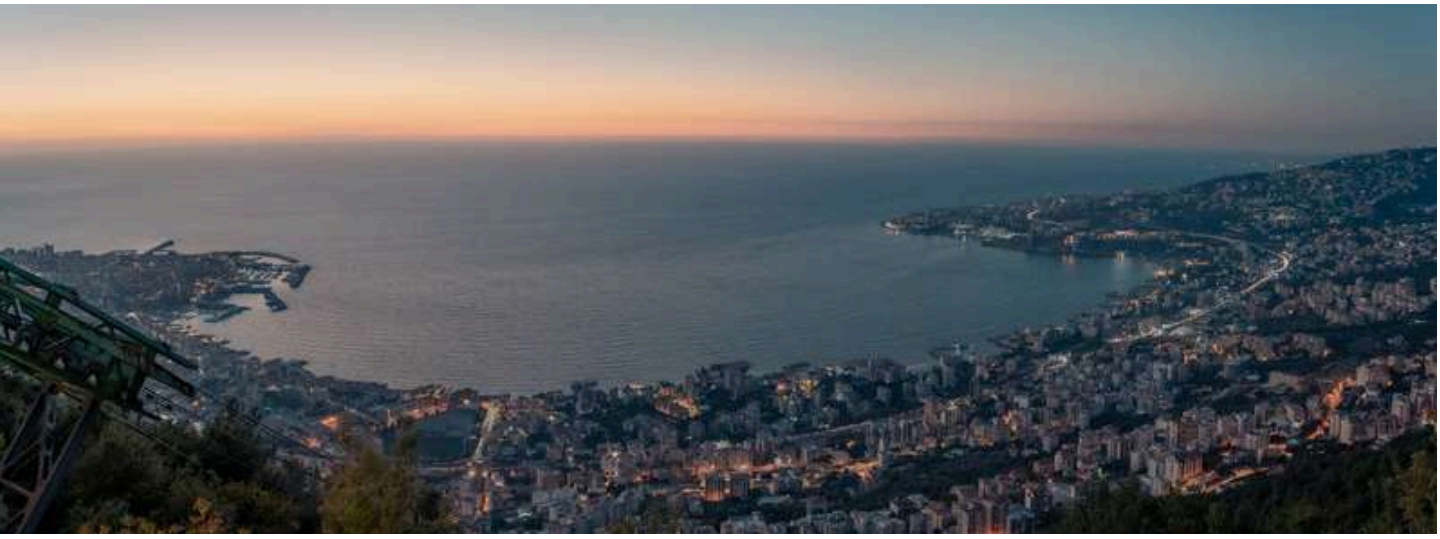
2. The Forum "Kick-off Meeting (2025)" hosted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and attended by the AWC to advocate for the regional process return was the first step to bring back the regional process on board of the 11th World Water Forum since the last presence in the 8th World Water Forum.

3. The LAS through The Arab Ministerial Council for Water will serve as the principal consolidation platform in collaboration with the 7th Arab Water Forum to: reaffirm Arab countries' commitments; agree regional priorities feeding the political, thematic, and regional tracks of 11th World Water Forum; finalize the Arab Water Status Report and policy messages; endorse recommendations reflecting the Arab vision for 11th World Water Forum declarations; and showcase innovations, case studies, and partnership pipelines.

4. At "11th World Water Forum (2027)", a high-visibility "Regional Process Showcase" including a pavilion/exhibition and dedicated technical sessions will present Arab solutions, NCWR projects, digital transformation experiences, WEFE nexus pilots, transboundary cooperation models, and evidence on resilience.

5. An "Arab Water Day" during the 11th World Water Forum will amplify regional voices and announce commitments.

6. Finally, the process will catalyze "implementation pilots and follow-up initiatives" during and after 11th World Water Forum.



5. Communication and Visibility

Regional Messages for Global Visibility:

- Water scarcity is a shared challenge while adopting regional cooperation and innovative solution help overcome those challenges: Arab countries face acute water scarcity, requiring regional cooperation and innovative solutions which is being embraced in order to address these water-related challenges.
- Water security is human security: Access to water is critical for human development, stability, and peace in the entire region.
- Water is not a tool for pressure: Transboundary river basins should be governed through inclusive, cooperative agreements grounded in international law. Upstream countries are encouraged to avoid unilateral actions, and any proposed projects should be developed and assessed through a regional, basin-wide perspective that safeguards the interests of all riparian countries and helps prevent harm.
- Emphasizing on the importance of coordinating the positions of member states and strengthening collective advocacy mechanisms against any unilateral practices by upstream states in shared regional and international rivers that significantly harm the rights of Arab states in these basins
- Sustainable water management is economic growth: Investing in water is investing in the future of Arab countries economies and communities.
- Communication will be treated as a strategic deliverable to ensure that the Arab voice is visible, coherent, and influential across 11th World Water Forum tracks.

- The process will develop an “Arab Region Pavilion and exhibition concept” for 11th World Water Forum, featuring interactive displays, digital dashboards, solution “booths,” and curated case studies, supported by high-quality communication products (short films, brochures, policy briefs, infographics, and media kits) in “Arabic and English”
- A dedicated “outreach and media engagement strategy” should start before the forum and continues during and after the forum to ensure regular updates through traditional and social media, with deliberate emphasis on Key regional priorities, and measurable progress, timed around key global moments (World Water Day, World Water Week, and major regional events).
- To reinforce identity and continuity, the regional process will adopt consistent “branding and to be used across events, publications, and the 11th World Water Forum showcase, ensuring recognition, coherence, and sustained momentum beyond the Forum cycle.



Highlight regional initiatives:

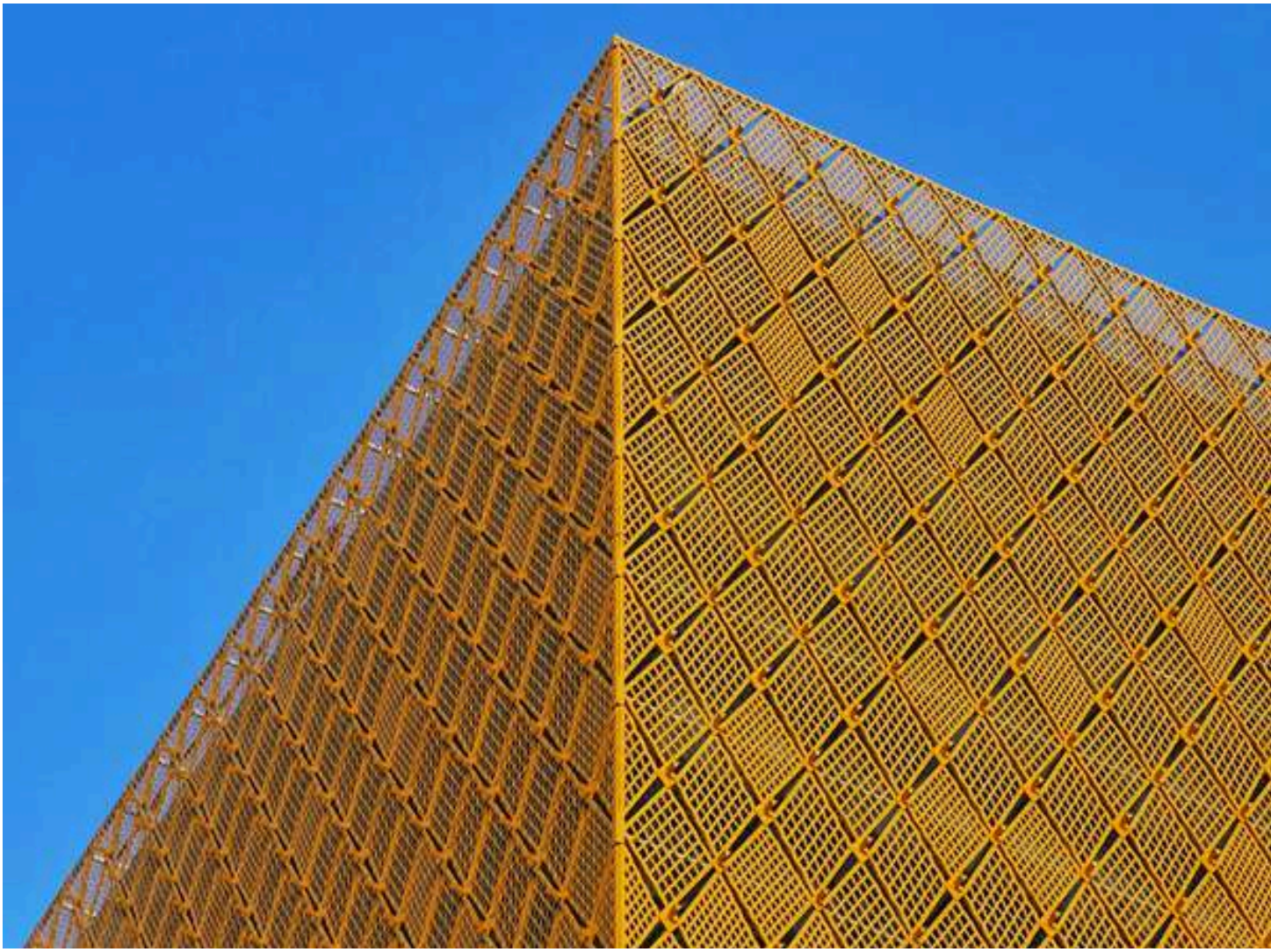
- Share stories of successful water projects, innovations, and cooperation in Arab countries and MENA.
- Amplify voices from the region: Feature perspectives from Arab countries, experts, and communities on water challenges and solutions.
- Focus on impact: Emphasize how water solutions contribute to broader goals like economic growth, stability, and human development.
- Partner with influencers and experts: Collaborate with regional influencers, experts, and organizations to amplify messages.

A potential declaration could emphasize on:

- Commitment to regional cooperation on water management and innovation.
- Recognition of water security as a key factor in the regional stability and development.
- Call for increased investment and support for water solutions in Arab region.
- Commitment to scale up the use of renewable energy within the context of Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystem (WEFE) Nexus as an urgent climate resilient action.

Strategic media partnerships:

- Partner with regional and global media outlets for feature stories, op-eds, and interviews with Arab water leaders.
- Engage specialized water/environment media networks to amplify messages internationally.



IV. Proposed Cross-Process and Inter-Regional Collaboration

Linkage with the other processes of 11th World Water Forum

Thematic Process

The Arab region will contribute with thematic sessions reflecting regional priorities such as NCWR and desalination, climate resilience and disaster risk reduction, WEFE nexus, transboundary water diplomacy and AI/digital innovation. Sessions will be co-organized with thematic coordinators to ensure coherence with the Forum's six themes ("Water Security", "Water Finance", "Water for People and Ecosystems", "Water Governance and Diplomacy", "Innovation for Water Management" and "Value of Water").

Political Process

Through the League of Arab States and the Arab Ministerial Water Council, the Arab region will consolidate political messages and recommendations for the 11th World Water Forum Political Process and Ministerial Declaration.



The Arab Ministerial Water Council serves as the principal intergovernmental ministerial platform for Arab coordination on water affairs within the League of Arab States framework. It brings together ministries and national authorities responsible for water resources, irrigation, water supply and sanitation, and related sectors, with coordination support from LAS technical bodies and relevant regional partners. The process will articulate a unified Arab position on water security, the human right to water and sanitation, transboundary cooperation, protection of water infrastructure, climate resilience, sustainable water finance, and innovation. Parliamentary, local authority, youth, women, civil society, academic and private-sector engagement will be encouraged to strengthen inclusiveness and policy ownership.

Other Forum processes
Collaboration with the Youth Program, including the Riyadh Water Youth Committee, will ensure that young professionals and emerging leaders from each region bring their perspectives, innovations and commitments into the regional sessions and outcomes. The Regional Process will also link with the Intersectoral Collaboration Program to connect regional water priorities with other sectors, such as energy, petrochemicals, mining and AI, and bring cross-sector partnerships and solutions into regional roadmaps and commitments.

Proposed Inter-regional dialogue and joint actions

Transboundary water cooperation
A joint session with African and Asian regions will exchange best practices on shared basins (e.g., Nile, Zambezi, Senegal, Euphrates–Tigris, Indus) and promote benefit-sharing, data-sharing and legal frameworks.

WEFE nexus and innovation
An inter-regional session with Mediterranean, African and Asian partners will showcase projects integrating renewable energy, water use efficiency and ecosystem protection, and discuss scaling innovative financing instruments.

Desalination and NCWR knowledge exchange
A knowledge platform will be established in partnership with countries to share technologies, regulatory standards and environmental safeguards.

Cross-regional solidarity
Cooperation with other regions and least developed countries will focus on water rights, climate adaptation, disaster risk management and capacity building, strengthening global south–south partnerships, with consideration for communities living under occupation and in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

V. Monitoring, Legacy and Post-Forum Follow-Up

Monitoring and evaluation framework

Regional coordination mechanism

The Regional Process Committee will oversee implementation of the roadmap, monitor progress against milestones and convene periodic reviews. A monitoring framework with indicators for policy adoption, implementation of NCWR projects, investment mobilization, capacity-building activities and gender/youth participation will be developed.

Digital dashboard

The online knowledge platform will host a dashboard tracking commitments, deliverables and progress, enabling transparency and accountability. Country profiles will be updated annually.

Alignment with global and regional agendas

Progress will be reported to the Arab Ministerial Water Council, LAS and UN processes (2028 UN Water Conference, SDG 6 monitoring, Paris Agreement, Sendai Framework) and integrated into regional strategies such as the Arab Water Security Strategy (2030).



Legacy and post-forum follow-up

Contributing to the long-term legacy of 11th World Water Forum

The long-term legacy contribution of the Arab regional process will be defined through four mutually reinforcing legacy pillars.

- **Institutionalization of the Arab Track:** Following 11th World Water Forum, the Arab Track will continue to function as a regional platform for dialogue, learning and cooperation, feeding into preparations for the 12th World Water Forum and other global fora.

- **Operationalizing the Arab Track** (and its committee/extended committee) as a durable regional coordination mechanism capable of convening governments and stakeholders beyond the forum cycle, maintaining continuity of priorities, and strengthening regional representation within global platforms.

- **Knowledge legacy**: producing and maintaining the Arab Water Status Report, policy briefs, and a bilingual knowledge platform that curates regional evidence, case studies, investment needs, and performance indicators serving as a standing reference for policymakers, practitioners, and investors.

- **Implementation legacy:** establishing an investable pipeline of “Arab Water Actions” and solution packages tracked through a transparent progress mechanism that links commitments announced at 11th World Water Forum to financing, delivery partners, and on-the-ground results. This legacy approach ensures that the Arab process is visible not only through declarations and showcases, but through sustained tools, institutions, and delivery pathways that remain active after 11th World Water Forum.



Supporting implementation and follow-up actions at regional and local levels

- Implementation follow-up will be organized as a structured “delivery backbone” that translates the five outcome categories into coordinated action at country, sub-regional, and regional scales.



- The Regional process Coordinator will support this by maintaining a results framework and implementation tracker that records: (i) endorsed policy messages and legislative/regulatory follow-ups; (ii) project and program pipelines (including feasibility/readiness status); (iii) partnerships and MoUs; (iv) financing engagements and commitments; and (v) measurable outcomes (service reliability, NRW reductions, reuse volumes, groundwater governance steps, early warning coverage, resilience investments, etc.).
- Technical Groups and countries will provide updates through short progress notes and structured stakeholder consultations.
- A practical follow-up mechanism such as an annual “Arab Water Actions Review” convened by AWC in coordination with LAS and partner institutions can be used to validate progress.

Feeding into preparations for the 12th World Water Forum

- The Arab Regional Process will be designed to create continuity into 12th World Water Forum by documenting outcomes, extracting lessons, and updating priorities based on evidence and progress.
- Immediately after 11th World Water Forum, the Regional Coordinator will lead preparation of a concise **11th World Water Forum Arab Regional Process Legacy & Lessons Report** capturing: what was achieved across the five outcome categories, which commitments were fulfilled or remain pending, what worked in stakeholder engagement and coordination, and what enabling conditions are required for scaling solutions.
- The Arab Water Status Report and policy briefs will be treated as "living" products, updated on a defined cycle to reflect new data, emerging risks, and new solution pathways.
- Maintaining the committee structure and knowledge platform ensures that the Arab Track can enter the 12th World Water Forum preparation phase with: (i) a clear priority agenda backed by evidence; (ii) documented implementation progress and remaining gaps; (iii) a pipeline of mature initiatives ready for announcement and scaling; and (iv) a tested coordination model for inclusive participation (including youth, women, utilities, cities, private sector, and academia).
- In practical terms, this means 12th World Water Forum preparation begins with a credible record of delivery and a refined regional narrative, rather than restarting the process from scratch.



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Aligning with global and regional agendas

- To maximize influence and resource mobilization, the monitoring and follow-up framework will be explicitly aligned with global and regional agendas and reporting cycles.
- At the global level, the process will link regional actions to the UN Water Conferences, SDG 6 targets, the Paris Agreement and adaptation planning (NDCs/NAPs), and the Sendai Framework priorities for disaster risk reduction particularly around droughts, floods, early warning systems, and resilient infrastructure.
- At the regional level, the process will align with LAS ministerial tracks, and AWF7 as a consolidation milestone, and relevant regional climate and development agendas.
- This alignment will be operationalized by mapping each “Arab Water Action” to: (i) relevant SDG 6 indicators and national implementation mechanisms; (ii) climate adaptation and resilience priorities and financing windows; and (iii) regional cooperation platforms (transboundary dialogues, shared aquifer initiatives, and Mediterranean/Africa/Asia partnerships). In parallel, the communication strategy will synchronize key progress announcements with major global moments (e.g., climate conferences and international water weeks) to maintain momentum, attract partners, and strengthen the Arab region’s policy influence.



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REGIONAL COORDINATORS

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	League of Arab States (LAS)	Coordinator

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11th WORLD WATER FORUM
RIYADH 2027

11th World Water Forum – Riyadh 2027

21–25 March 2027

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

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