

REGIONAL PROCESS Terms of Reference

11th WORLD WATER FORUM, RIYADH, 2027

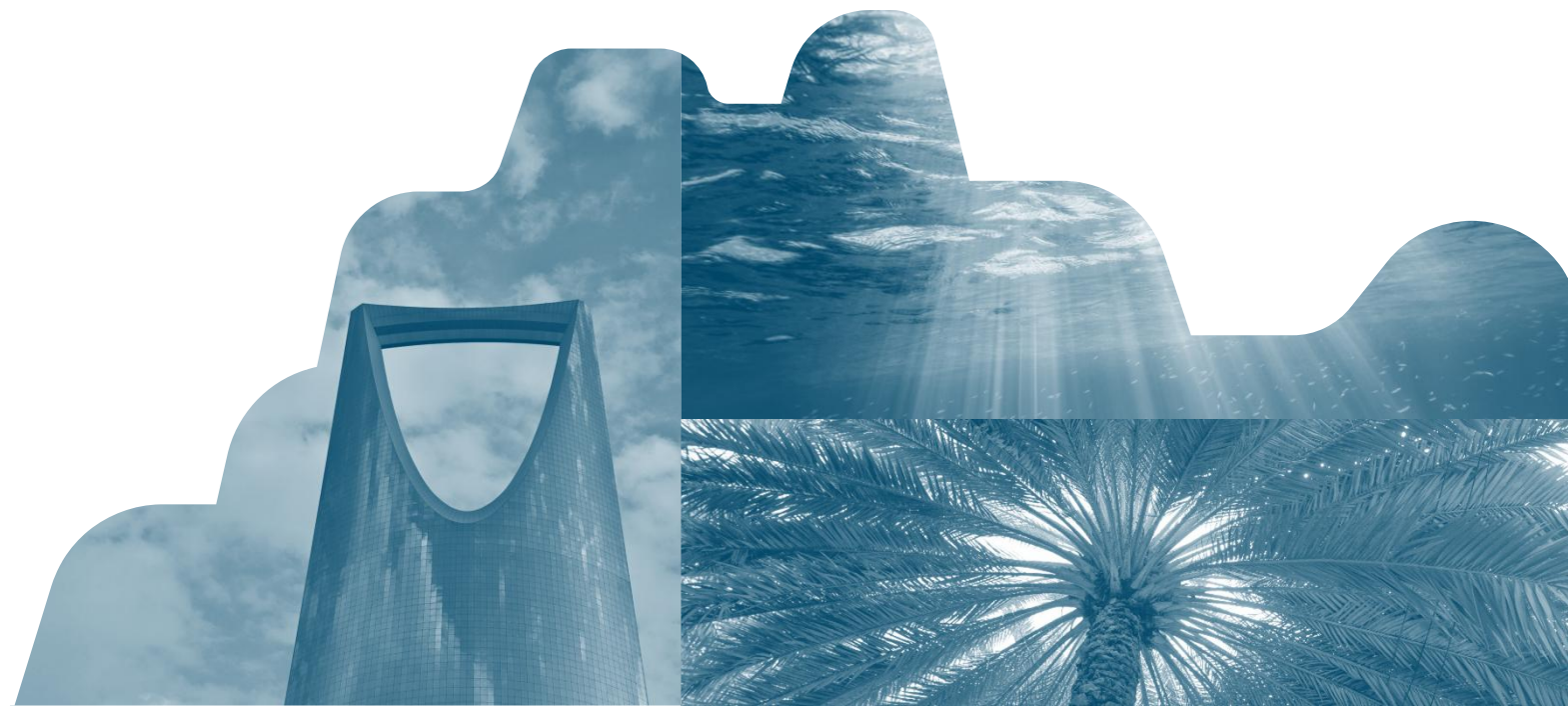


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1. DOCUMENT DEFINITION

This document outlines the general overview for the Regional Process of the 11th World Water Forum, detailing its objectives, regional structure, working groups, coordination mechanisms, engagement principles, timeline, and expected outcomes and deliverables. It is intended to serve not only as a guiding framework but also as a practical manual for each region and sub-region as they develop and implement their contributions to the Regional Process leading up to Riyadh 2027.

2. REGIONAL PROCESS IN THE 11th WORLD WATER FORUM

Despite differences in geography, climate, and development, many regions and countries face similar water challenges and can benefit from shared strategies. The Regional Process is a foundational pillar of the World Water Forum, providing locally grounded insights that enrich both the Thematic and Political Processes. It fosters collaboration, supports knowledge exchange, and highlights scalable solutions and best practices across regions.

Centered on practical experience, the Regional Process brings forward real-world case studies and approaches rooted in local and regional realities. While the Thematic Process offers a more global, analytical framework, the Regional Process emphasizes implementation, collaboration, community knowledge, and on-the-ground action.

This process is deeply interconnected with the Forum's broader structure. Since thematic priorities vary across regions, the Regional Process ensures that local challenges and solutions directly inform global policy discussions. It strengthens synergies between regional actors and global platforms, shaping policy inputs and commitments that reflect real needs and opportunities.

The 11th World Water Forum seeks to further reinforce this approach, positioning the Regional Process as a driver of tailored political commitments and practical thematic outcomes. To succeed, it relies on inclusive engagement, drawing a wide range of stakeholders from regions and sub-regions to co-create actionable, locally relevant strategies.

Importantly, the Regional Process also aims to leverage all global water events leading up to the Forum, using these platforms to build momentum, deepen collaboration, and align efforts. By rooting global ambition in local reality, the process turns dialogue into deliverables, connecting vision with action through shared learning and regional leadership.

Distinct Role within the Forum Architecture

The Regional Process takes a contextual and practice-driven approach, emphasizing case studies, demonstration projects, and policy applications. Each regional and sub-regional working group will therefore analyze and present lessons learned, policy innovations, and tangible outcomes that can inform both the Thematic and Political discussions.

The Process is closely interlinked with the other two Forum processes:

- It translates thematic priorities into regionally relevant contexts, highlighting local dimensions of water security, finance, governance, and innovation.
- It feeds into the Political Process by generating policy recommendations, commitments, and partnership models rooted in regional experiences.



By doing so, the Regional Process ensures that the Forum’s outcomes are not only globally legitimate but also regionally actionable and locally meaningful.

Under the theme **“Action for a Better Tomorrow,”** the Regional Process of the 11th Forum will provide an essential platform for each region - **Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, and the Arab Region** - to voice its priorities and develop collaborative strategies for sustainable water management.

Regional consultations will culminate in initiatives and regional synthesis sessions during the Forum week in Riyadh, demonstrating how regional initiatives contribute to global water and climate resilience, and how local innovation can inform international cooperation.

3. REGIONAL PROCESS OBJECTIVES

The Regional Process translates the Forum’s global water vision into each region's local realities, priorities, and knowledge and vice versa. The Regional Process will:

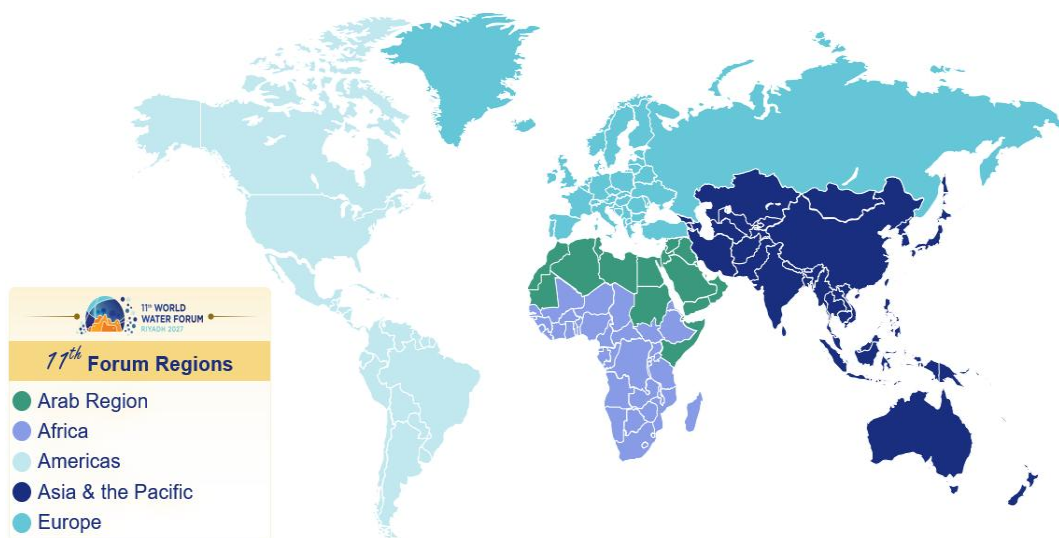
- Facilitate regional dialogues and cooperation on local and regional water-related challenges and synergetic efforts
- Identify region-specific priorities and develop tangible local action plans under the Forum’s Regional process.
- Catalyse peer regional learning and exchange of experiences through intra and inter-regional dialogue on shared water challenges, innovative practices, management and governance models.
- Enable regional water stakeholders to elevate water on the political and economic agenda and provide actionable inputs for policy-making and deploying concrete solutions.

4. REGIONAL CONFIGURATION

The world will be divided into distinct regions, reflecting climatic, demographic, hydrological, geopolitical, and socio-economic contexts. The regional configuration, decided by the Forum’s co-hosts has 5 regions as follows:

- **Americas**
- **Asia & The Pacific**
- **Africa**
- **Arab Region**
- **Europe**





Note: The sub-regions and countries included in each region are subject to approval of the regional coordinators and the 11th World Water Forum co-hosts.

5. PROPOSED DELIVERABLES

Each region participating in the 11th World Water Forum is expected to produce a set of structured deliverables that contribute to the overall coherence, visibility, and impact of the Regional Process. These outputs will serve as both standalone contributions and key inputs into the Thematic and Political Processes.

There are 6 proposed deliverables for each region:

5.1. Regional Concept Note

A strategic planning document outlining the full scope of regional and sub-regional activities leading up to the Forum. It must include:

- Detailed work plans with clearly defined actions, responsible institutions, and sequencing of tasks.
- Timelines and milestone targets, including preparatory consultations, report drafting phases, showcase preparation, and synthesis events.
- Monitoring and coordination mechanisms, including regular reporting schedules and integration points with the Regional Process Commission (RPC), Thematic, and Political Processes.
- Stakeholder engagement plans, including outreach activities, consultation formats, and inclusivity benchmarks (e.g., gender, youth, Indigenous engagement).

The concept note must be continuously updated and validated through the Regional Coordination Group (RCG) and submitted to the ISC Bureau for review at key intervals.

*The Regional Concept Note Template will be provided by the Regional Process team of the Forum secretariat.



5.2. Regional Report

A flagship analytical product capturing the region's core water-related challenges, progress, and future directions. It must include:

- A diagnostic overview of the region's water landscape (e.g., resource availability, governance structures, socio-economic pressures, etc.).
- Identification of priority challenges, categorized by sub-regional context and linked to Forum themes or topics.
- Policy and institutional mapping, analyzing gaps and opportunities across governance, finance, and service delivery.
- Locally relevant solutions, including innovations, best practices, and traditional knowledge systems.
- Inputs from stakeholder consultations, backed by data or thematic briefs.

A synthesis of these findings will be shared at the Forum and will also inform global messages and final Forum statements.

*The Regional report template will be provided by the Regional Process team of the Forum Secretariat.

5.3. Regional Process Showcase

A curated platform for dynamic presentation during the Forum, designed to elevate local and regional water solutions. The Showcase will include:

- Interactive exhibits featuring flagship projects, policy innovations, financing mechanisms, and technological solutions.
- Regional highlight sessions, co-organized with Forum working groups, to facilitate peer learning and raise visibility for successful initiatives.
- Multi-stakeholder Representation, Regional stakeholders including government officials, civil society, youth, Indigenous leaders, and private sector actors

The Showcase is an opportunity for each region to elevate its voice on the global stage, demonstrate practical impact, and contribute meaningfully to the Forum's legacy.

5.4. Voluntary Regional Commitments

Each region should articulate a set of voluntary commitments, formulated through stakeholder consultations and aligned with Forum outcomes. These include:

- Basin-scale resilience pacts or transboundary water cooperation frameworks.
- Finance compacts, such as regional investment platforms, climate adaptation funds, or green bonds.
- Policy charters, promoting regional standards for sustainable water governance or equitable access.
- Commitments should be measurable, time-bound, and transparent, with a mechanism for post-Forum monitoring and follow-up.

These voluntary pledges are strongly encouraged to be showcased during the Forum's Regional Showcase. In line with prior decisions made by the Co-Chairs, the Forum Secretariat will incorporate these commitments into the Forum's final political and thematic outcomes.



5.5 Regional Innovation & Initiatives Portfolio

Each region shall curate a portfolio of innovative, concrete initiatives to be proposed, incubated, or launched through the Regional Process and showcased at the Forum. The purpose is to encourage creativity and accelerate policy, partnership, and project solutions rooted in regional realities. It is recommended that these elements be incorporated into the Regional Concept so that they can serve as a core component of the Showcase content, and that the final discussions and outcomes be fully reflected in the Regional Report.

6. REGIONAL PROCESS THEMATIC FRAMEWORK

The core value of the Regional Process is to embed local realities into the global water agenda by framing water issues through region-specific perspectives. It enables a more tailored and context-sensitive understanding of challenges and fosters the development of regionally appropriate, actionable solutions. As part of the 11th World Water Forum, the Regional Process plays a pivotal role in connecting regional insights with the Forum's overarching theme of "Action for a Better Tomorrow".




To ensure a coherent and aligned articulation of water issues across processes, the Regional Process is closely linked with the Thematic Process. While the Thematic Process structures dialogue around six themes; Water Security, Water Finance, Water for Humans and Nature, Water Governance and Diplomacy, Innovation for Water Management, and Value of Water, the Regional Process enriches this framework by grounding it in local conditions, priorities, and practices.

Each region is requested to select a minimum of three themes and topics belonging to those themes from the Forum's six themes. To maximise coherence, each of the regions commits to:




- a) Map regional priorities against the Forum themes
- b) Highlight overlaps to foster inter-regional dialogue
- c) Feed priority gaps to the Thematic Process so they can be addressed globally.

This structured engagement enables a two-way integration: thematic discussions benefit from grounded regional evidence, and regional actors benefit from global policy and innovation trends. Regions may also choose to address additional topics beyond the minimum, allowing them the flexibility to incorporate emerging or highly localized concerns. This approach promotes consistency across the Forum, encourages inter-regional collaboration, and creates opportunities for synergy and shared learning.



Theme 1 - Water Security 	Theme 2 - Water Finance 	Theme 3 - Water for Humans and Nature 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1A. Groundwater and Surface Water: Determining availability and promoting equitable, cross-sectoral and transboundary management in rural and urban areas 1B. Water-Related Disasters: Mitigating and adapting to floods, droughts, and desertification through planning, early-warning, and nature-based solutions and mitigation infrastructure, including dams and water storage infrastructure 1C. Integrated Water Resource Management: Expanding IWRM using basin-level and source-to-sea approaches under climate and demographic pressures 1D. Closing the Loop in Water Resources Management: Enhancing demand efficiency, promoting reuse and circular economic principles, strengthening resilience by integrating non-conventional resources 1E. Securing Water for Food Security: Advancing sustainable agriculture through efficient irrigation, equitable allocation, alternative water, and climate-resilient transformation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2A. Applying Innovative Water Financing Mechanisms: Scaling emerging tools like fintech, green/blue bonds, adaptive tariffs, and ecosystem payments beyond blended finance 2B. Private and Public Sectors Engagement: Opening New Corridors: Aligning and mobilizing PPPs, corporate and impact investments, and smart subsidies under strong public frameworks 2C. Funding for Water Resilience and Climate Adaptation: Prioritizing investment in WASH, climate-smart f, and scalable, nature-based adaptation solutions 2D. Funding and Loans for Multiscale Projects: Expanding access to finance for small and mid-scale projects and for smaller entities or stakeholders using microfinance, decentralized funds, and inclusive models 2E. Enabling Conditions for Scaling up Strategic and Inclusive Water Financing: Strengthening legal frameworks, institutional capacity, and risk management to unlock multi-scale finance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3A. Enhancing Access to Safe Drinking Water Services for All: Guaranteeing safe drinking water as a human right through resilient service delivery, inclusive governance, cost-effectiveness, and nature-based solutions 3B. Developing Access to Sanitation Services and Improve Wastewater Collection and Treatment: Ensuring full sanitation access and manage the entire wastewater chain from containment to reuse and safe discharge 3C. Protecting and Restoring Water Ecosystems and Aquatic Biodiversity: Restoring freshwater and coastal ecosystems through nature-based solutions, watershed protection, and pollution control 3D. Improving Water Quality in a One Health and Multi-Sectoral Approach: Enhancing water quality by addressing pollution across sectors through a One Health lens linking people, animals, and nature 3E. Water-Energy-Food-Health-Ecosystems-Education Interlinkages: Positioning water as the core connector across sectors through a new horizontal, cross-cutting approach

■ Theme ○ Topic

Theme 4 - Water Governance and Diplomacy 	Theme 5 - Innovation for Water Management 	Theme 6 - Value of Water 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4A. Adopting Policy, Regulatory Frameworks, and Institutional Mechanisms: Aligning national and local governance to catalyze multi-level partnerships and deliver on SDG water targets 4B. Strengthening Political Will and Coordination: Bridging the gap between global goals and local implementation through coordinated, accountable action and resource alignment 4C. New Instruments for Water Sustainability Policy Consensus: Empowering actors from local to transboundary levels to co-develop water policies via inclusive, multi-scale cooperation 4D. Towards Holistic Water Advocacy and Public Awareness Programs: Elevating water through education, civic engagement, stakeholder dialogues, and broad awareness platforms 4E. Engaging Unheard and Vulnerable Voices: Promoting human rights-based governance by including women, youth, Indigenous people, and cross-sectoral actors in decision-making; innovating new water diplomacy solutions to provide water and sanitation to communities in humanitarian crisis and conflict zone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5A. Hydro informatics and AI Tools for Water Management: Leveraging AI, Earth observation, and digital tools with strong governance, cybersecurity, and tech-sector collaboration. 5B. Deploying Cutting-Edge Water Technology: Moving from pilots to full-scale adoption of innovative technologies, environmentally sound and socially equitable over the long term, including reuse, desalination, and smart sensors. 5C. Data and Overcoming the Lasting Challenge: Modernizing water information systems with real-time data, digital twins, and decision-support innovations. 5D. Engaging Citizen Science and Community-Based Knowledge: Combining traditional knowledge and citizen-led innovation with technologies tailored through local participation 5E. Knowledge Sharing: Advancing open data, peer learning, capacity building, and lifelong training opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6A. Valuing water for sustainable economic growth: Recognizing and strengthening the full value of water for sustainable development and climate resilience 6B. Advancing efficiency in water management in different sectors: Promoting efficient and circular water use across sectors, notably through smart irrigation, reuse, and urban planning 6C. Pricing water for sustainable management: Implementing water pricing and policies that reflect water's full value, including environmental and social costs 6D. Valuing and footprinting water to drive efficient water policies: Monitoring water footprints of different sectors and virtual flows in trade to reduce impacts and promote responsible consumption 6E. Water resources as a national natural capital: towards a paradigm shift: Ensuring water allocation guided by efficiency and fairness, maximizing benefits while ensuring access for all

■ Theme ○ Topic

7. COORDINATION BODIES AND OPERATING PRINCIPLE

7.1. COORDINATION BODIES:

Level	Body	Key Functions
Forum-wide	Regional Process Commission (RPC)	Sets common concept; arbitrates cross-region issues; liaises with Political & Thematic Commissions
Region	Regional Coordinating Group (RCG)	Crafts regional concept note, supervises sub-regions, validates session programme, drafts Regional Report and other region-level deliverables
Sub-Region	Sub-Regional Coordinators Group (SCG)	Identify sub-regional priorities and solutions and coordinate with session organizers to develop and refine sessions content
Session	Session organizers	Develop content, identify and prepare speakers, and deliver outcome briefs

Regional Process Commission (RPC):

The RPC is responsible for making preliminary decisions on the Regional Process, subject to final confirmation by the ISC Bureau. It is composed of all appointed Regional Coordinators and serves as the central body guiding the strategic direction of the Regional Process. The RPC is tasked with developing the overall concept and operational plans to ensure balanced, efficient execution across



regions. It also leads the planning and coordination of inter-regional dialogues, fostering cross-regional exchange and collaboration. The World Water Council (WWC) and the Saudi Arabian national secretariat will provide technical support to RPC meetings as needed. Additionally, the RPC is expected to maintain close interaction with the Thematic and Political Process Commissions, contributing regional insights and outcomes to help shape the broader Forum agenda.

Regional coordination group (RCG):

Each region will establish a Regional Coordination Group (RCG), composed of the Regional Coordinator(s) and Sub-Regional Coordinators. The RCG is responsible for developing regional and sub-regional priorities that align with the six thematic areas of the Forum. It will lead an inclusive, multi-stakeholder process by engaging diverse actors throughout the preparatory period, with the aim of producing coherent and actionable Regional Process outcomes. This work will be carried out under the guidance of the Regional Process Commission (RPC). Each RCG will also organize a Regional Synthesis Session during the Forum, drawing on the contributions and results generated by the Regional and Sub-Regional Coordinators.

Each regional coordinator must designate a qualified Representative to serve as the focal point. This individual should have experience in major international water events such as the World Water Forum, possess strong skills in multi-stakeholder coordination, and be capable of convening key actors within their region.

The RCG will meet regularly, both virtually and in person to coordinate and deliberate on the operational and strategic details necessary to fulfill the Regional Process mandate, as endorsed by the International Steering Committee (ISC) Bureau

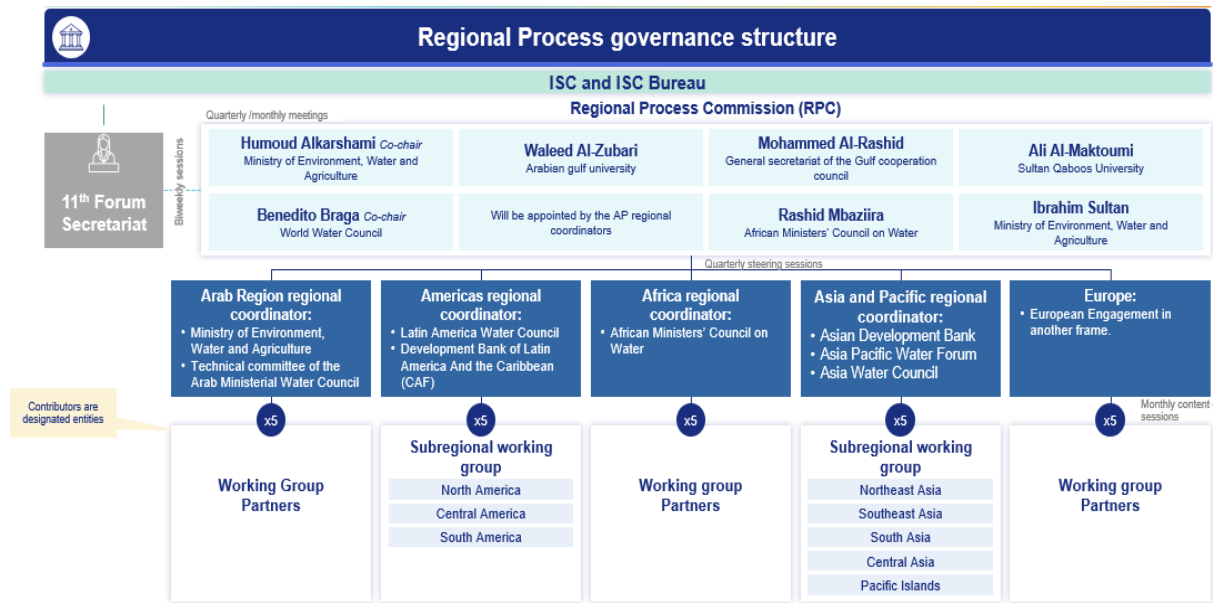
Sub-regional Coordination Group (SCG):

The Sub-regional Coordination Group is composed of the Sub-regional Coordinator(s) together with the designated session organizers responsible for developing and delivering the sub-regional sessions. Each sub-region may appoint up to two sub-regional coordinators, selected by the Regional Coordinator(s) based on their expertise and relevant experience. This group is responsible for identifying and shaping sub-regional priorities and solutions. The group will join in designing and developing sub-regional priorities and coordinate with session organizers to develop sessions by providing guidance and updated information to the session organizers under the guidance of the regional coordination group.

In cases where no sub-regional structure is established within a region, the Regional Coordinator(s) shall be responsible for identifying the regional priorities and solutions, as well as for planning and developing the sessions under that region.

Detailed guidance for session planning and development will be provided separately by the Secretariat.





9. PROPOSED TIMELINE

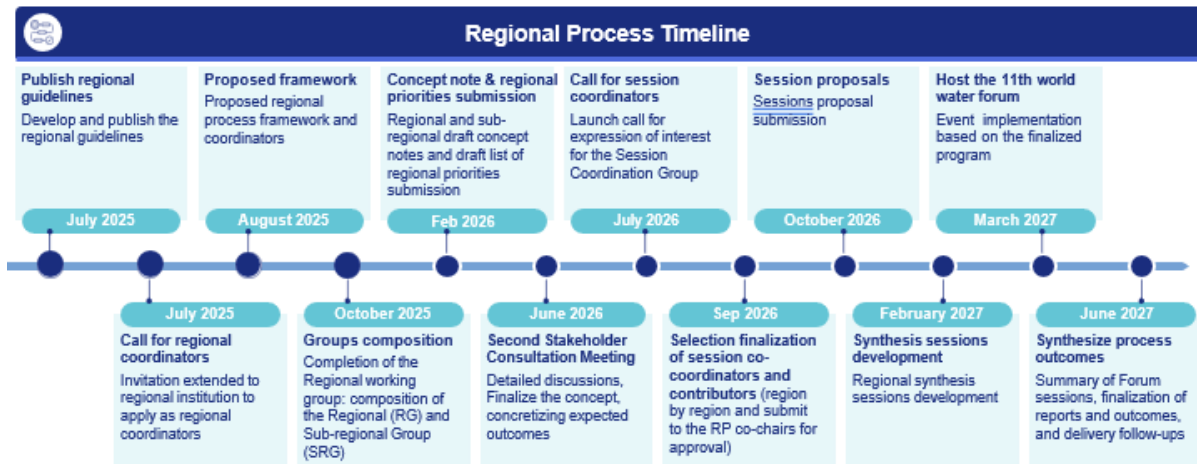
Phase	Milestone	Indicative Date	Outputs
Activation	Activation of working groups (regional, thematic, political)	October - November 2025	Working groups and governance established
Coordinator	Selection of the Regional Coordinators	October 2025	Regional Coordinator Appointment
Appointment	1st RP coordinators' meeting	November 2025	Information on the Timeline, Concept development, Way to work with the group, Roles and Responsibilities, Q&A
Regional Process Information Session	Appointment of the Sub-regional Coordinators (only when necessary, submitted by the regional coordinator and confirmed by RP co-chairs)	February 2025	Working Group Member list
Development	Draft Regional Concept Note Submission	March 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Concept Note
	Refinement of the concept notes drafts Submission semi-final drafts	April-May 10 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission semi-final draft of the CNs by May 10th (announced) Submitted semi-final drafts will be uploaded on the website Submission of the Draft of the Session list and the brief descriptions by end of May

Phase	Milestone	Indicative Date	Outputs
Inter-process	Inter-process dialogues (Thematic, Political Process Co-chairs)	May 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process co-chairs meeting to frame the inter-process dialogues Prepare the inter-process dialogues during the 2nd SCM
2nd SCM	2nd Stakeholder Consultation Meeting	June 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Validated session list, descriptions Finalize core elements of the CNs - Addition of inputs to the Regional Concept from the meetings <p>*Concept note will be expected to be completed until the 2nd SCM.</p>
Preparation	Submission of the final regional concept and the list of the selected session organizers	Beginning of July 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final regional concept and session organizers Final regional concept note will be uploaded replacing the semi-final versions
Call for regional session coordinators (region basis)	Call for Regional Session Coordinators and Contributors by Region	July-August 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Session coordinators identification and submission to the co-chairs (Sep)
Coordination	Session proposals submission	October 2026	Session proposals
Development	Synthesis sessions development	On-going	Preparation of sessions
Synthesis	Draft Regional Reports	November 2026	Pre-Forum synthesis
Final proposals	Regional Session, Synthesis Session Development	Feb 2027	Final Proposals
Forum Week	Regional Showcase, sessions and deliverables	March 2027	Results of the Regional Process & commitments
Post-Forum	Summary of Regional, Sub- regional Deliverables	June 2027	Final Regional Report
Follow-up	Post-Forum action review	June 2027	Implementation tracker

*Timeline is subject to change upon the process decision-making and preparation progress.



The Regional Process is implemented through several core phases until the Forum in 2027



Note: Timeline is subject to change upon the process decision making and preparation progress.

10. LINKAGES WITH OTHER FORUM PROCESSES

The Regional Process is structurally and strategically interconnected with the Political and Thematic Processes of the 11th World Water Forum. These linkages are not only critical for coherence but essential for ensuring that region-specific insights directly shape global policy, thematic priorities, and actionable commitments.

a) Upstream Integration

- Regional Coordinators will participate ex-officio in relevant Political and Thematic Process task teams.
- Their role is to inject regional and sub-regional insights, evidence, and recommendations into the early drafts of ministerial declarations and thematic outputs.
- Regions should prepare briefs or position inputs summarizing priority issues, diagnostic findings, and lessons from consultation phases to inform these upstream processes.

b) Downstream Translation

- Outcomes from the Political and Thematic Processes (e.g., joint declarations, strategic statements, cross-sector policy recommendations) will be translated into region-specific commitments and follow-up pathways.
- These outcomes should be reflected in each region’s voluntary commitments, post-Forum action plans, and contributions to local finance and policy pipelines.
- Regional Reports and Synthesis Regional Session must include a dedicated section on how Forum-wide conclusions can be operationalized at regional and sub-regional levels.

c) Coordinated Milestones and Synergies

- A minimum of one Tri-Process Coordination Retreat (target: April 2026 during the 2nd stakeholder consultation meeting) will be held to ensure alignment of messaging, timelines, and outputs across the Regional, Political, and Thematic Processes.



- A dedicated Synthesis Dialogue during Forum week will enable real-time integration and cross-fertilization between regional showcases, political dialogues, and thematic sessions.
- Regional Coordinators are expected to participate in **joint milestone check-ins** to ensure coherence in framing, terminology, and intended outcomes.

d) Shared Communication and Messaging

- Communication materials (briefs, videos, infographics) produced through the Regional Process should align with the core narrative of the Forum and complement messaging from the Thematic and Political processes.
- Coordinators are encouraged to flag synergies and gaps through the Regional Process Commission for escalation or resolution.

