

Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme
26th Ordinary session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council
(Paris, 5-7 June 2024)

**Celebration of the 50th anniversary of IHP and 60 years of
Water Sciences at UNESCO**

Item 6 of the Provisional Agenda

Summary

This document provides information on the preparation of the 50th Anniversary of IHP and 60 years of water at UNESCO.

Decision proposed:

The IHP Council may wish to consider taking note of and providing guidance on the present document and discussing and approving the related draft resolution.

Celebration of the 50th anniversary of IHP and 60 years of Water at UNESCO (item 6)

Background

1. In 2025, the UNESCO Intergovernmental Hydrological programme (IHP) will have 50 years of service to UNESCO's Members States and hydrological community. The programme was created in 1975 following the international hydrological decade making 60 years of hydrological/water sciences at UNESCO making tremendous contribution in advancing our understanding of the hydrological cycle. The decade led a solid scientific foundation for the development of the IHP programme implemented through phases. The programme has evolved through the different phases, from a single discipline hydrological science to a multi-disciplinary, interdisciplinary towards transdisciplinary programme. Each phase has leverage and build on the previous phases. The holistic nature of the programme led to the progressive integration of social, economic, environmental, and cultural issues for better water resources management with the current 9th phase as a truly transdisciplinary programme on science for a water secure work in a changing environment with five interrelated and intertwined priority areas.

2. Throughout the years, the programme has built an extended and very rich water network named UNESCO water family comprising more than 170 National Committees and Focal Points, 29 Category II water centres, 84 water Chairs, 16 Flagship Initiatives with the creation also of the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) in charge of producing the United Nations World Water Development Report. After 60 years of hydrological sciences and 50 years of the Programme, it is opportune to take stock on the evolution of hydrological sciences and its future development and the role the IHP has played in contributing to addressing water challenges.

Objectives of the celebration

3. The main objectives of the celebration are:

- To take stock of the evolution of hydrological sciences during the last 60 years and what were the key milestones and contributions of IHP and look forward to the science of hydrological in addressing evolving complex and interrelated water challenges.
- To map the impacts at the different levels (national, regional and global) of the programme in addressing water related challenges for a water secure world.
- To map the contribution of the programme and related water family in building capacity of member states both human and institutional capacities.
- To map strategic partnerships established and supported by the IHP programme throughout the years
- To raise awareness on the programme through outreach and celebrations at national, regional and global levels

Global celebration campaign and raising awareness

4. Proposed steps towards the celebration campaign:

- Prepare an outreach and communication plan.
- Launch a comprehensive global outreach and awareness campaign supported by relevant messages utilizing various media channels to inform the public and decision makers about the programme and its achievements in contributing to water security.
- Create a dedicated logo and establish a dedicated website for the celebration.

- Develop infographics, and documentaries to engage diverse audiences, including schools, universities, and local communities and decision makers.
- Develop policy-science interface communication materials with high-level publications to further engage with a wider range of stakeholders and decision makers.
- Consider the materials to be disseminated in local languages to engage local communities.
- Engage communities through storytelling and local stories related to impacts of IHP on the ground.
- Work with goodwill ambassadors and/or youth ambassadors for awareness-raising and greater outreach.
- Global, regional, national and local celebrations

Preparation for the Celebration

5. In preparation for the Celebration of the 50th anniversary of IHP and 60 years of Water Sciences at UNESCO, IHP is organizing a scientific colloquium and a water family symposium alongside the 26th Session of the IHP Council on 3 and 4 June 2024. The scientific colloquium which will be held on 3 June (IHP/IC-XXVI/Ref. 6.b) will aim to discuss and reflect on the 50 years of the evolution of the science of hydrology in the light of IHP's initiatives and activities contributing to operationalize hydrological methodologies such as floods and drought monitoring, groundwater assessment, water quality monitoring, snow, glacier modelling and ecohydrology approaches, and provide meaningful implementation strategy to address water resources challenges faced by the Member States. Participants will further discuss challenges and opportunities in view of the current state of the science of hydrology, technological advances, and digitization opportunities within a context of rapid global change and an outlook for future strategic opportunities towards 2050. The scientific Colloquium will set the stage to prepare and provide scientific related outcomes to be published and launched in 2025 to mark IHP's 50 years of service to Member States. These include an editorial for outreach, opinion paper in a high-quality journal, Special Issue, Flagship book and science policy brief.

6. The UNESCO Water Family Symposium (IHP/IC-XXVI/Ref. 6.b) to be held on 4 June in the morning will discuss the contributions of the members of the Family comprising National IHP Committees and Focal Points, centres, chairs, flagship initiatives and WWAP in celebrating the 50th anniversary of IHP, including among others involvement in IHP implementation, knowledge generation, capacity building and awareness.

Draft Resolution XXVI-V

Celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP)

The Intergovernmental Council (IC) of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP) of UNESCO

Noting	IHP/IC-XXVI/6 providing broad ideas for the celebration of the 50 th anniversary of IHP and 60 years of water sciences within UNESCO,
Taking note	of the oral report of the communication and outreach committee on the celebration of the 50 th anniversary of IHP,
Recognizing	the contributions throughout the last 50 years of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme and its related Water Family to promoting international scientific cooperation for improved knowledge and building capacity that benefits all Member States in addressing their complex and inter-related water challenges,

- Further recognizing** the pivotal role of Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme as the only intergovernmental programme within the UN system on water sciences, education and training for advancing hydrological sciences throughout its different phases from simple discipline to a holistic, integrated, interdisciplinary towards transdisciplinary approach in addressing water challenges,
- Endorses** the preliminary proposal of the Secretariat for the celebration at all levels of the 50th Anniversary of IHP and 60 years of water sciences at UNESCO;
- Decides** to establish a task force comprising the members of IHP bureau and members of communication and outreach committee to finalize the plan of the celebration and coordinate with the Secretariat, Member States and water family the celebration of 50th Anniversary of IHP throughout the year 2025;
- Requests** The task force in coordination with the Secretariat to report to the 63rd IHP Bureau session in 2025 on the progress and to the 27th session of IHP Council on the achievements of the celebration;
- Invites** all Members States and the UNESCO Water Family to support the celebration of IHP 50th anniversary at national, regional and global by providing technical and/or financial support.