SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme

IWRM Acceleration Package

October 2021

Content

2.A Process description for Stage 2 IWRM Action Planning

2.B Facilitators' Guide

2.C Guidelines for participation and inclusion

2.D Action planning and prioritisation of Actions

2.E SDG 6 IWRM Action Plan Outline

SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme

IWRM Acceleration Package

2.A Process description for Stage 2 IWRM Action Planning

October 2021

The **SDG 6 Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Support Programme** assists governments in designing and implementing country-led responses to **SDG indicator 6.5.1**, which measures the degree of IWRM implementation. The Support Programme aims to monitor and measurably accelerate progress towards water-related SDGs and other development goals, in direct support of the official SDG monitoring and reporting processes.

Under the guidance of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and coordinated by the Global Water Partnership (GWP) in collaboration with the UNEP-DHI Centre and Cap-Net, the Support Programme brings together partners in each country representing governments, civil society, academia and the private sector, in the spirit of **SDG 17** "Partnerships for the Goals". The Support Programme is structured according to the following three stages:

Stage 1 – Identifying challenges: Employ the SDG 6.5.1 national monitoring and reporting framework to identify, through multi-stakeholder consultations, critical areas for attention that hinder progress on IWRM. This Stage is completed through the periodic completion by countries of a survey on SDG indicator 6.5.1 designed to allow countries to evaluate the degree of IWRM implementation. Periodic monitoring of this indicator provides a window of opportunity to revisit and revise IWRM Action Plans.

Stage 2 – Developing IWRM Action Plans: Using the key IWRM challenges identified in Stage 1, the aim of this stage is to facilitate a government-led multi-stakeholder process to formulate and prioritise appropriate responses to those challenges. The result of Stage 2 is typically an IWRM Action Plan (the name might be adapted for each country), which includes a series of attractive investment opportunities to systematically guide the implementation of solutions to IWRM challenges.

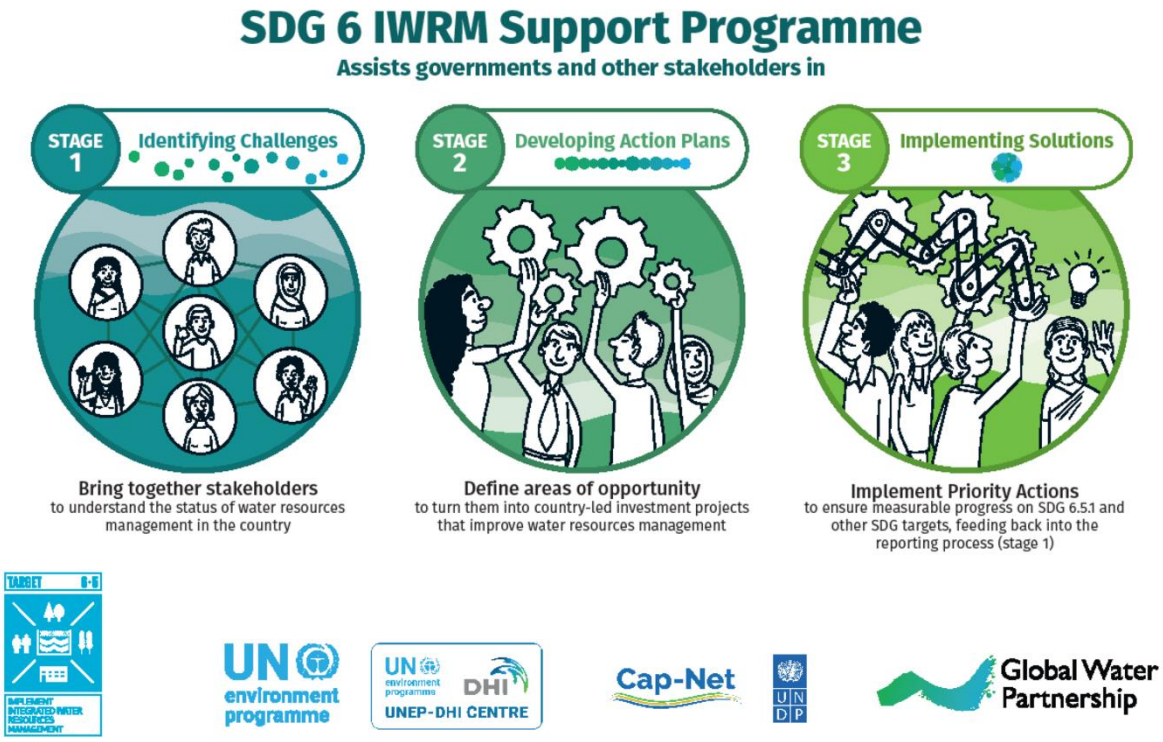
Stage 3 – Implementing solutions: Support countries in implementing IWRM solutions aimed at achieving SDG 6 and other water-related goals as a measurable contribution to progress towards countries' development objectives.

This document is part of the IWRM Acceleration Package, which is intended as guidance for anyone interested in Stage 2 of the Support Programme. Separate packages are available to guide the processes for Stages 1 and 3. The IWRM Acceleration Package contains suggestions on how the process might be carried out, which should be customised to each country's circumstances.

Why is progressing on SDG 6.5.1 so important?

The only way to attain the ambitious 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is through an integrated approach that deals with the interconnected nature of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Integrated water resources management (IWRM) helps to coordinate sustainable development and management of the scarce resource across all uses and levels. With water scarcity and pollution increasing, finding ways to address conflicts and trade-offs is critical to allocate and use water in an efficient, sustainable and equitable manner[1]. SDG indicator 6.5.1 on IWRM implementation directly and indirectly supports the achievement of many other SDG targets – including health, agriculture, poverty, energy, climate, the environment, gender and peace[2], as well as all of the other targets under SDG 6.

Stage 2 in brief



Based on the IWRM challenges reported by each country during the periodic UN-led assessment of SDG indicator 6.5.1,[3] **Stage 2** of the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme focuses on formulating appropriate responses to strengthen areas where the country is facing water-related challenges. This is done by designing targeted interventions as a series of investment opportunities. When Stage 2 is finalised, these interventions should be ready to be funded to ensure they can be implemented in Stage 3.[4] It is important to note that the three stages of the Support Programme represent three tracks

[1] UN Environment (2018). Progress on integrated water resources management. Global baseline for SDG 6 Indicator 6.5.1: degree of IWRM implementation.
[2] UNEP (2021). Progress on Integrated Water Resources Management. Tracking SDG 6 series: global indicator 6.5.1 updates and acceleration needs
[3] Results of both the baseline and the 2020 update can be found on http://iwrmdataportal.unepdhi.org/
[4] Depending on the nature and complexity of the individual actions as defined in Stage 2, more detailed preparatory work may be required prior to their full implementation. Investing in this preparatory work could be part of implementation readiness, when transitioning between Stages 2 and 3.

that may not necessarily be in sequence. This means that you do not necessarily have to finish one stage before moving on to the next, and in some cases, more than one stage can run in parallel.

The objective of the Support Programme is to support country responses to SDG 6.5 on IWRM implementation as an entry point to accelerate the implementation of SDG 6 and other water-related goals, ultimately progressing towards sustainable development. In this sense, the output of Stage 2 is **an IWRM Action Plan**,[5] which should complement the existing IWRM framework of a country, be aligned with broader development priorities, the SDG landscape, and the climate agenda. The content of Action Plans is explained in more detail in document *2D Action Planning and Prioritisation of Actions*. The IWRM Action Plan should be developed through a multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral gender-responsive approach and follow the suggested process as described below.

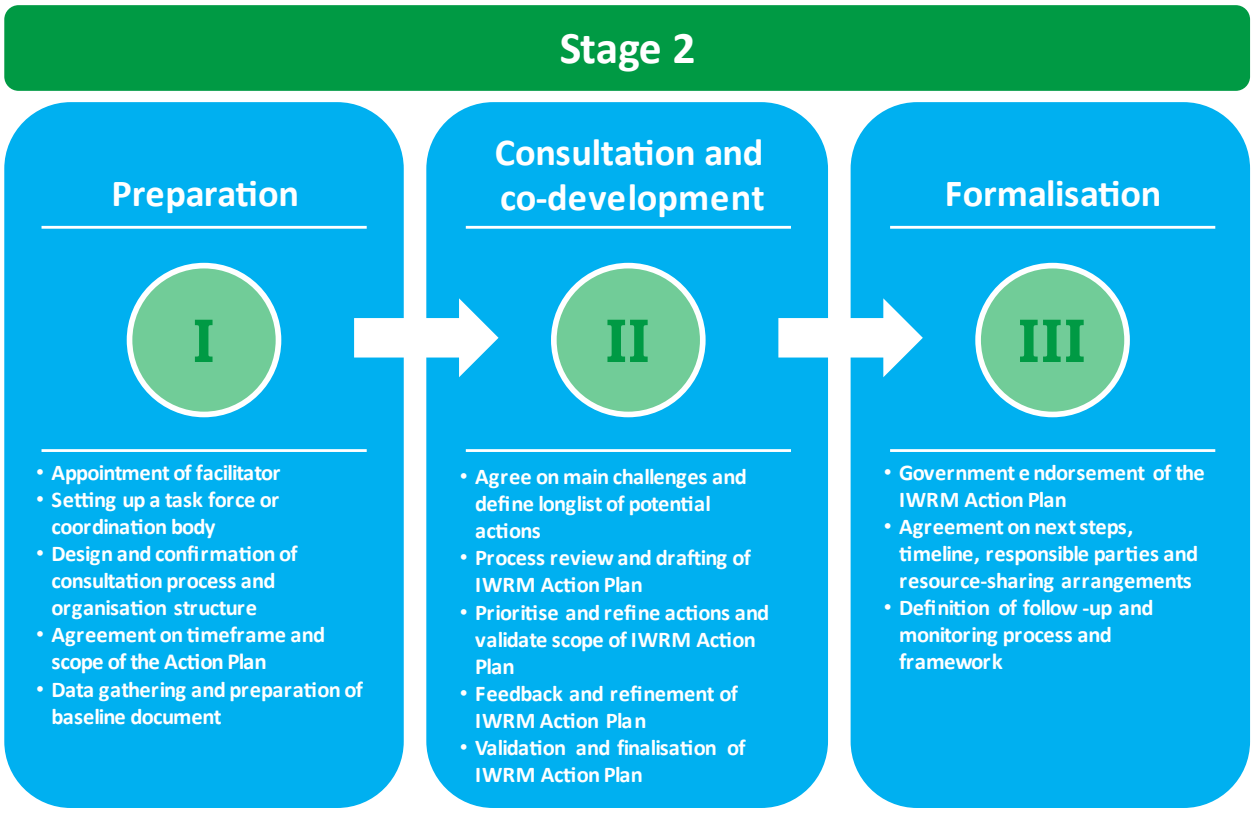
> In Africa, the activities described in this document are implemented through the **Continental Africa Water Investment Programme (AIP) SDG Investments Support Programme** (see https://aipwater.org/sdg-investments/). Stage 2 as described in this document contributes to Work Package 7 under the AIP SDG Programme, whereas global Stage 3 contributes to Work Package 8 of the AIP SDG Support Programme.

Suggested Stage 2 process

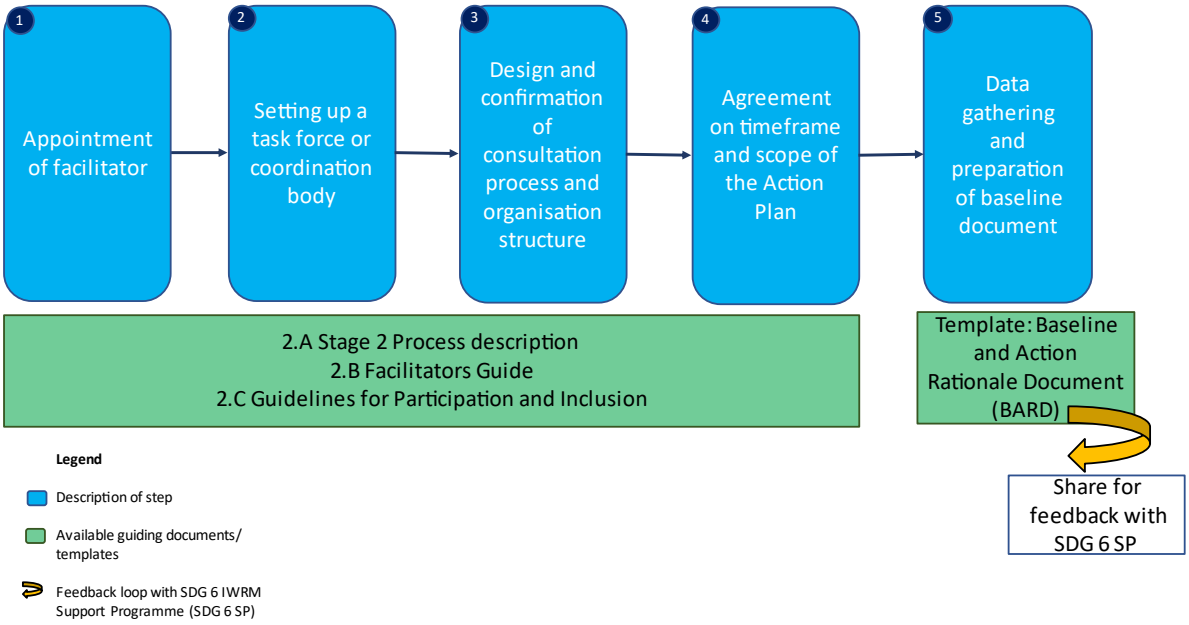
For those countries assisted by the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme, there is a separate application process[6] for Stage 2 support which must be completed before the formal activities can start. That application process includes the formal request for support from the anchor institution(s) within the country, the completion and approval of a concept note and budget, and the formalisation of the administrative arrangements. Ownership of this process by that/those anchor institution(s) is essential to create meaningful interlinkages with a country's broader SDG/development objectives and ensure the interventions can impact beyond their immediate outputs by contributing to ongoing processes.

Even though it is recognised that this process needs to be adapted to the reality and context of each country, Stage 2 should ideally include some overarching aspects. Once that step has been completed, the following is a suggestion, based on the first 10 country experiences[7], of how the formal process may be organised.

[5] Different names for the IWRM Action Plan may be employed in different countries, according to what is most appropriate within their national context. IWRM Action Plan will be used as the generic name for these products at the global level.
[6] The application process is available upon request from the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme, on sdg6iwrmsp@gwp.org.
[7] More information on the existing Action Plans can be found on the Support Programme website.



Preparation



This paragraph provides an overview of the *preparation*, the first sub-stage of the Stage 2 process.

i. **Appointment of facilitator**: Once the preparation has officially started, normally a process facilitator is appointed. The facilitator will be responsible to operationalize planning,

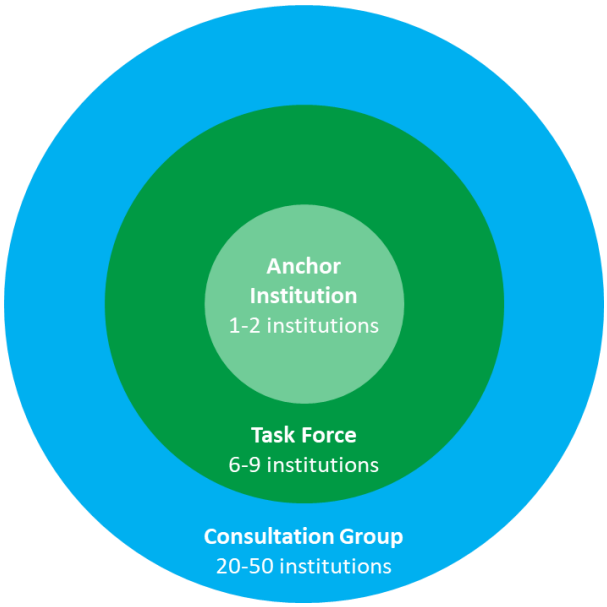
implement and organize the stakeholder consultations of Stage 2 process, and might also be contributing to the drafting of the IWRM Action Plan. The exact responsibilities and scope of work of the facilitator may vary from country to country, but the *2.B Facilitators Guide* provides a suggested Terms of Reference of the facilitator.

ii. **Setting up a task force or coordination body**: Once the *preparation* has officially started, the anchor institution(s) should ideally bring together and chair a *task force* or similar coordination body to oversee the process of co-developing the IWRM Action Plan. This task force should include a small number of institutions, with a suggestion for 6-9, such as the ministries of finance and planning, development partners, donors and relevant coordination platforms. Engaging such partners at this stage should ensure their ongoing support through Stage 2 and hopefully Stage 3. If such a coordination body already exists within the country, it may be used for this process.

iii. **Design and confirmation of consultation process and organisation structure:** The GWP network typically supports the Stage 2 activities and the consultation process and may hire a facilitator for that purpose (see document *2B Facilitators' Guide* for more details). The appropriate **anchor institution(s)** should make the final decisions on the process and organisational structure for Stage 2 based on the views presented by all stakeholders. A possible suggested simple organisation structure for Stage 2 can be viewed below. The composition of the **Task Force** and the definition of the anchor institution(s) is described in the previous paragraph. At this stage, also the detailed list of stakeholders to be consulted (constituting the **Consultation Group**) should be drafted and agreed upon. It is important that stakeholders are invited to participate in the process from both within and outside the water community, including but not limited to agriculture, energy, economic development, environment, urban planning, disaster risk reduction, climate change. Types of relevant stakeholders that might be considered in the consultation group include national and sub-national government institutions,[8] non-governmental organizations, water and energy utilities, the private sector, academia, UN agencies, representatives of vulnerable and marginalised groups,[9] parliamentarians, international development agencies, the donor community, etc. The inclusion of mandated institutions and other actors responsible for different SDG targets is highly recommended for creating synergies and coherence across inter-related objectives. Participation in the process should be analysed from a gender and age perspective, to ensure that there is fair representation of men and women, young and old, when defining priorities that leave no-one behind.

[8] Including public financing and planning institutions and other mandated institutions for sectors affected by, and which affect, water resources

[9] While these groups will be country-specific, they may include but not be limited to those representing gender groups, young people, indigenous communities, farmers, faith groups, trade unions, etc. Document 2C contains guidance on stakeholder inclusion.



iv. **Agreement on timeframe and scope of the Action Plan:** As mentioned earlier, an IWRM Action Plan is a shared multi-annual commitment from different stakeholders in the country to advance IWRM implementation as a contribution to achieving the water-related SDGs. The Action Plan should though be limited in time and scope – typically an Action Plan might include a set of around 10-15 priority actions that can be implemented in a timeframe of around 3-5 years.

v. **Data gathering and preparation of baseline document**: A basic analysis should be carried out that facilitates a common understanding of the overall IWRM context, and which should be summarised in a baseline document, for which the optional *Template Baseline Analysis and Rationale Document (BARD)* is available upon request.

> **IWRM Baseline and Action Rationale Document (BARD)**
> The purpose of the BARD is to explain how actions on water governance can help improving the performance of the Water System in a country. This document can serve as a starting point and rationale for Stage 2 of the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme. It frames the possible interventions that different stakeholders might consider as priorities for advancing on water security in the country over the coming years. It provides guidance for: an analysis of the context, functioning and performance of a country's water system; functional analysis of the governance of the water system; and a framework to link governance and performance in order to identify critical governance areas to be addressed.

Whether or not this template is used, the baseline analysis should consider the following as input:

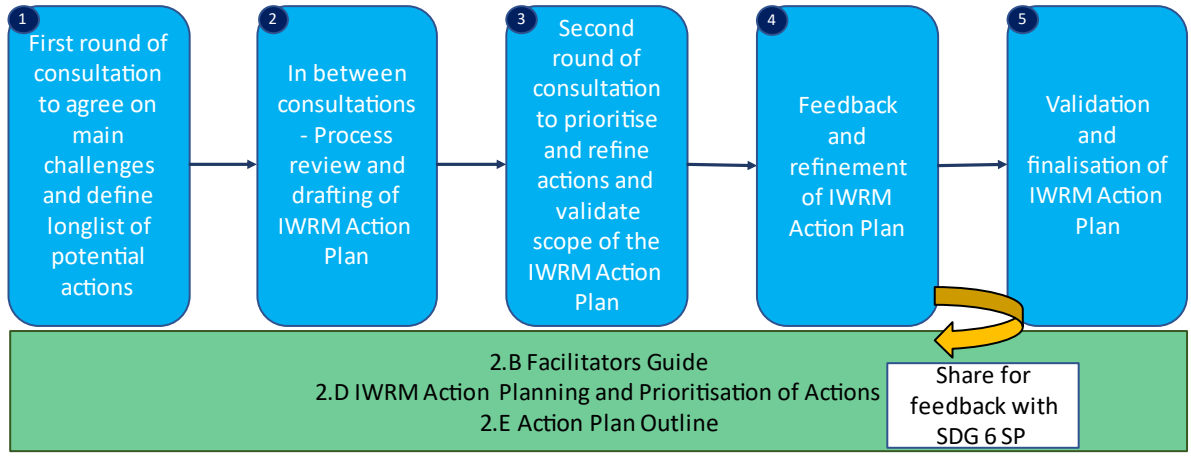
- **the latest status of SDG indicator 6.5.1 on IWRM**[10] – the basis for identifying existing water governance challenges and opportunities
- **the Stakeholder Consultation Report,**[11] if GWP facilitated a Stage 1 workshop in the country in 2017-18 and/or 2020

[10] See http://iwrmdataportal.unepdhi.org/countrydatabase
[11] See https://www.gwp.org/en/sdg6support/consultations/stage-1-activities/sdg-6.5.1-reporting-in-2020/

- **Stakeholder mapping/analysis** (if available) of main actors involved in water resources management, at country/ basin/ local level
- **existing water management, climate and development policies, plans and strategies** – the basis for ensuring synergy with national commitments and ongoing initiatives (e.g., existing IWRM planning frameworks/ policies/ institutions/ management instruments/ financing, national climate adaptation programmes, resilience-building plans, ongoing institutional reforms, etc.)
- **other water-related policies, plans, strategies and priorities** – the basis for identifying areas of opportunity in which an IWRM approach could generate significant progress in water-related areas (e.g., sanitation, irrigation, flooding, drought, water quality, freshwater ecosystems, etc.)
- **relevant water management studies and assessments** – the basis for generating a firm evidence base for the identified challenges, priorities and proposed actions (e.g., hydrological surveys, flood-risk assessments, water quality reports, climate risk assessments, etc.)
- **relevant data and information related to the country context** (available stocks of social, economic, and environmental capital, including water resources availability and infrastructures (incl. natural infrastructures)
- **relevant data related to the functioning and performance of the water system** (e.g. 1. *input indicators* such as volume of water withdrawn per water use category, water stress index, annual investments in water-related infrastructure per water use category, operating budget for water resources management system and value created per water use category, volume of wastewater treated per water use category, volume of treated wastewater reused, volume of water distributed not invoiced, irrigated/ equipped surface, rate of withdrawals (per water use category) from fossil aquifer reserves/ overexploitation of aquifers; 2. *outcome indicators* such as current status of other SDG 6 indicators, relevant indicators related to costs of water-related disasters, value of water-related production of goods and services)

The output for this analysis should be a **baseline document** for analysis and approval by the task force and to be subsequently used by participants as reference during consultations and the development of the IWRM Action Plan. This baseline document should outline the IWRM performance- and governance-related challenges and flag areas for possible attention, looking as much as possible at the root causes of the obstacles. It is suggested that this document should be shared with the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme to facilitate review and feedback.

Consultation and co-development



This paragraph provides an overview of the *consultation and co-development*, the second sub-stage of the Stage 2 process.

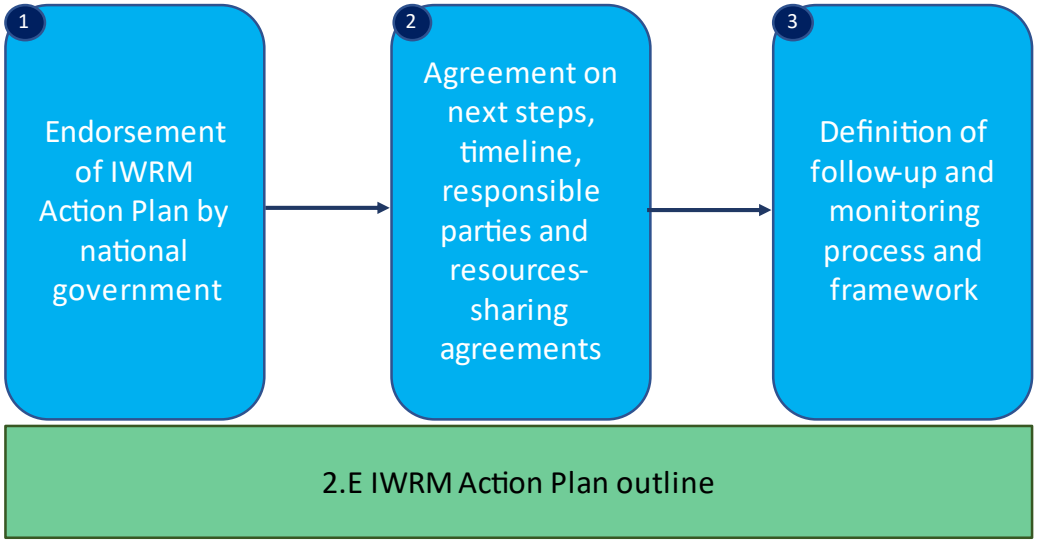
Considering how IWRM relates to many SDG targets and other development frameworks, multi-stakeholder input will be needed from a variety of sectors and levels. This will enable a more holistic assessment of water management benefits, knock-on effects and possible trade-offs across a range of areas and will help to jointly identify relevant interventions. Recommendations on the constitution of the consultation group have already been provided in the chapter about sub-stage *preparation.*

Typically, at least two multi-stakeholder workshops or consultations may be organised during Stage 2, hosted by the government and facilitated by GWP's in-country team and/or the hired facilitator, where appropriate. Such workshops and consultations may be either in-person or online and may be diverse (online virtual sessions, online polling, asynchronous discussion fora, etc.), to facilitate broad and inclusive participation. More details on the use of virtual means of consultation are provided in document *2C. Guidelines for effective multi-stakeholder participation and inclusion*.

The SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme and its partners are also available to provide input to the stakeholder consultation process, for instance countries that are interested in focusing on water quality or on water-related ecosystems can request a presentation from UNEP on the status and challenges around 6.3.2 and 6.6.1 in the respective country.

i. **First round of consultation to agree on main challenges and define longlist of potential actions**: Often a first workshop will serve to present the baseline document, receive feedback from different stakeholders on the water-related challenges, prioritise those challenges, and identify a long list of potential actions that would contribute to solving those challenges.
ii. **Process review and drafting of IWRM Action Plan:** Meetings of the task force may be required between open consultations to refine the process and review the input provided by different stakeholders to produce the draft IWRM Action Plan, following document *2E. SDG6 IWRM Action Plan Outline*.
iii. **Second round of consultation to prioritise and refine actions and validate scope of the IWRM Action Plan:** A second workshop or consultation might be organised to prioritise and add input to the actions, as well as to validate the scope of the IWRM Action Plan. A more detailed explanation about the suggested scope and prioritisation of actions can be found in *2D Action Planning and Prioritisation of Actions*.
iv. **Feedback and refinement of IWRM Action Plan**: Once the priority interventions have been drafted, but before their formalisation, they should be shared with the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme to facilitate feedback and experience-sharing between countries, and to identify additional opportunities to support them. The draft IWRM Action Plan should then be submitted for review by the task force and then by other relevant stakeholders. The review and approval mechanism may differ in each case but should be transparent for stakeholders who have participated in the process.
v. **Validation and finalisation of IWRM Action Plan**: Once all additional feedback from stakeholders has been received and reviewed, the IWRM Action Plan should be finalized in close coordination with the members of the task force and the anchoring institution(s) with a view to get the approval of the final IWRM Action Plan by the task force and the coordination group.

Formalisation



This paragraph provides an overview of the *formalisation*, the third and final sub-stage of the Stage 2 process.

i. **Government endorsement of IWRM Action Plan**: Following approval by the task force and consultation group, the national government should officially endorse the IWRM Action Plan to facilitate its subsequent implementation. The degree of institutional formalisation required will depend upon the circumstances of the country in question but may include publication through official government channels or gazettes, its formal adoption by government platforms, or any other means that express political support for the plan. It may also be officially endorsed by other institutions that commit to supporting its implementation.

ii. **Agreement on next steps, timeline, responsible parties and resource-sharing agreements**: To ensure this implementation, it will be necessary to agree on the next steps, timeline, responsible parties, and resource-sharing arrangements. That may involve the signing of additional Memorandums of Understanding, collaboration agreements or other contractual documents. The intention is for the interventions in the Action Plan to be funded for implementation as soon as the Action Plan is finalised. It is hoped that the government may formally assign budgetary resources to support the implementation of the plan, which may in turn be used to leverage external financial support. The IWRM Action Plan may also provide input to other existing plans, programmes, project documents or similar, incorporating the identified IWRM-based activities. These may include formal written input to an ongoing SDG or national development process such as a broader SDG 6 action plan, a National Adaptation Plan, the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), local development plans, etc. These mechanisms may in turn contribute to the financial resources necessary for the implementation of the Action Plan. Once completed and approved by the anchor institution(s), the IWRM Action Plan should be shared with the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme, which will post it on the Support Programme website to promote the actions and share the results, including posting the individual actions on the IWRM Action Plan Searcher. The IWRM Action Plan may be produced in the main language spoken in the country, accompanied by an executive summary in English (please see the template that is included in the Annexe of document *2E. IWRM Action Plan Outline*).

iii. **Definition of follow-up and monitoring process and framework**: The key to success in implementing the IWRM Action Plan will be a clear, structured method for monitoring, evaluating, and communicating progress with all interested stakeholders. A successful plan will

also ensure accountability for investments made. Further guidance is available in document *2E. SDG6 IWRM Action Plan Outline* and its associated templates. Incorporating an IWRM approach into water-related governance processes may be medium- to long-term in nature, so outcome-level results may not materialise during the initial intervention period, depending on the type of governance change targeted. In this sense, countries are encouraged to use the opportunity provided by the periodic monitoring and reporting on SDG indicator 6.5.1 to follow up on their Action Plan. However, countries are also encouraged to monitor Action Plan implementation using either existing or newly designed processes and frameworks more suited to the specifics of their circumstances, available resources and priority areas of intervention. That may also potentially include the monitoring of SDG 6.5.1 at the sub-national level, or at the regional or continental level. There is a need to ensure compatibility between different monitoring systems being utilised to monitor IWRM advancement, the IWRM Action Plan, and the water-related SDGs more generally.

Suggested roles and responsibilities

Actor	Role/responsibility
Anchor institution(s): 1-2 government institution(s), including the ministry with a mandate for SDG 6.5.1	• overall ownership of the process • coordination with the task force and consultation group, other governmental institutions and ongoing processes in the country and/or regions • chair of the task force • formal convener of any consultation workshops • should ideally commit budgetary resources to support the implementation of some of the priority actions
Task Force: 6-9 key national stakeholders	• oversees the preparation of and approves the IWRM Action Plan • provides input to any consultation workshops/other stakeholder engagement mechanisms • may contribute financially to the Stage 2 process and/or the implementation of some of the priority actions
Consultation group: 20-50 relevant stakeholders	• is invited to review and provide feedback where appropriate on the baseline document • provides input to the long list of possible IWRM actions and overall direction of the IWRM Action Plan • takes part in the prioritisation effort aiming to finalise the actions • looks to synergise its own activities, studies and analyses with the priority IWRM actions, to support implementation
GWP: Regional or Country Water Partnerships or group of partners (as applicable)	• liaison between the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme and anchor institutions in each country • identification and mobilisation of key stakeholders and coordination structures • preparation and organisation of any workshops or other stakeholder consultations • recruitment and management of external support, such as facilitators or other consultants • support to the overall process and development of the IWRM Action Plan
SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme: UNEP, GWPO, UNEP-DHI, Cap-Net	• coordinates knowledge exchange between countries and reporting on lessons learned • develops and delivers bespoke knowledge materials to support country actors • (when required and available) allocates catalytic funding to support Stage 2 activities • reviews and provides feedback on the list of prioritised actions and draft IWRM Action Plan • promotes the finalised IWRM Action Plan through its communication channels

Indicative Stage 2 timeframe

There is no set timeframe for implementing the whole process of Stage 2, as this will be defined by needs and circumstances in each country. However, based on past experience, it is anticipated that Stage 2 may be completed in 6-9 months. An indicative timeline for this process can be found below:

	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9
Preparation									
Appointment of facilitator									
Setting up of task force/ coordination body									
Design/ confirmation of process and organisation structure									
Agreement on timeframe and scope of Action Plan									
Data gathering and preparation of baseline document									
Consultation and co-development									
1st stakeholder consultation (agree on main challenges, define longlist of actions)									
Process review and drafting of Action Plan									
2nd stakeholder consultation (prioritise and refine actions, validate scope of Action Plan)									
Feedback and refinement of Action Plan									
Validation and finalisation of Action Plan									
Formalisation									
Government endorsement of Action Plan									
Agreement on next steps, timeline, responsibilities, resource-sharing arrangements									
Definition of follow-up and monitoring process/ framework									

Budget

The SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme is available to accompany country-led efforts to design and implement their IWRM interventions, and upon request, may provide up to € 20,000 to facilitate Stage 2. It is expected that this process should also be co-funded out of government budgets and/or locally leveraged funds, to at least the same amount as provided by the Support Programme for Stage 2 (up to € 20,000). Such co-funding may be in-kind or in-cash and should be mentioned in the application process and reported after finalising Stage 2. That implies that the overall cost of implementing Stage 2 may be around € 40,000, although this varies according to the relative costs of activities within each country, whether the process is conducted through in-person and/or online means, etc.

Example of funding for Stages 2 and 3

Country X requests € 16,000 from the Support Programme for Stage 2, committing at least the same amount (€ 16,000) for that Stage. Upon completion of the Stage 2 activities, and if required, the Support Programme may provide up to € 19,000 to support Stage 3 implementation (€ 4,000 unused from Stage 2 plus an additional € 15,000), with the same expectation for the country to contribute at least the same amount (€ 19,000) for Stage 3, either in-cash or in-kind.

If the amount requested from the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme is less than € 20,000 for Stage 2, the difference between the amount requested and € 20,000, plus an additional € 15,000, may be made available upon request to support Stage 3 implementation, to be requested after finalising Stage 2. In that case, it is expected that the Stage 3 implementation should also leverage at least the same amount in funding from in-country sources. In that way, the Support Programme may provide a maximum of € 35,000 combined, for Stages 2 and 3, leveraging a total of at least € 70,000.

The financial support will be channelled through GWP's network, including its Regional Water Partnerships, Country Water Partnerships and/or groups of organised partners. The application process and criteria are available upon request from the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme on sdg6iwrmsp@gwp.org.

IWRM Acceleration Package

A suite of guidance materials and templates has been developed to support countries in implementing the methodology in this process description. Referred to as the IWRM Acceleration Package, it includes the following documents:

2A Process Description – describes the purpose and process involved in designing an IWRM Action Plan. It introduces important concepts and methods to build a sustainable process.

2B Facilitators Guide – a basis for hiring the facilitator to manage the process. Describes in detail the key deliverables and activities expected of the facilitator and may be annexed to their contract.

2C Guidelines for effective multi-stakeholder Participation and Inclusion – given the multi-stakeholder nature of the consultations, this document guides the selection of an appropriate set of stakeholders to take part in the consultations.

2D Action Planning and Prioritisation of Actions – describes the details of an Action Plan and useful guidance on prioritising actions.

2E IWRM Action Plan Outline – to facilitate preparation of the Action Plan, each section has guidance on the suggested focus, completion of which can facilitate subsequent implementation of the selected actions.

Finally, the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme provides more in-depth guidance based on the Acceleration Framework through an online course.

Online IWRM Action Planning course - Available through the Cap-Net Virtual Campus from the end of 2021, the course will cover the basics of IWRM action planning as well as useful techniques for facilitation, negotiation and project implementation etc. The course is free of charge and available to anyone interested. The link to the course will be posted when ready.

The IWRM Acceleration Package will be updated periodically, based on the experience gained in implementing it. The SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme coordinators are open to feedback and suggestions that would contribute to its improvement through sdg6iwrmsp@gwp.org.

Support the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme!

The SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme also requires additional financial support to facilitate this process and assist more countries. Interested donors should write to sdg6iwrmsp@gwp.org for more information on how to contribute to the success of the Support Programme.

Key definitions

In this document, some of the key terms employed have a particular meaning to this context. To provide greater clarity on some of these key terms, please refer to the following definitions:

- **IWRM Action Plan:** a shared multi-annual multi-stakeholder commitment towards advancing IWRM implementation, containing a limited number of priority actions. The exact name of this document may vary from country to country.
- **Priority actions (or interventions):** ambitious investment opportunities that could attract funding and support from the national public and private sectors and international donors. “Actions” could be projects, programmes, reforms, or any other relevant initiative which uses an IWRM approach, on any aspect related to the hardware or software of IWRM.

- **Investments**: time and/or other financial or non-financial resources provided by any organisation or individual when focusing on a particular action.
- **Anchor institution(s):** key government body/bodies within the national government, typically the body in charge of water resources management, which will lead the Stage 2 and 3 processes. This should include the institution in charge of reporting on SDG 6.5.1.
- **Task Force:** A coordination body with a limited number of members with which the IWRM Action Plan is co-developed. In addition to the anchor institution(s), this may include, for example, the ministries of finance and planning, development partners, donors and relevant coordination platforms.

SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme

IWRM Acceleration Package

2.B Facilitators' Guide

October 2021

Purpose of this document

This document is part of an overall Acceleration Package for Stage 2 of the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme. Please refer to document *2A. Stage 2 Process Description*, for more details on Stage 2 and the resulting IWRM Action Plan, which is the main output of Stage 2. To contribute to this output, the Support Programme may hire a facilitator who will follow the process to its successful completion[1]. This document is intended to guide the activity of that facilitator, suggesting some techniques that may be used to be customised according to the country's circumstances. This document may be an annexe to the contract used to hire the facilitator.

This document is supplemented by the Action Planning course offered on the Cap-Net Virtual Campus, which will be online by the end of 2021. To access the course, or for any support required on the Stage 2 process, please write to sdg6iwrmsp@gwp.org.

Suggested Terms of Reference for the process facilitator

Objective:

The output of Stage 2 is a stakeholder-endorsed and time-bound IWRM Action Plan endorsed by the relevant national anchor institution(s). The facilitator's role in this process is to assist, with the relevant GWP team, the anchor institution(s) and relevant stakeholders to co-design the IWRM Action Plan. To achieve this objective, the facilitator should follow the Stage 2 process as described in document *2A. Stage 2 Process Description*. The relevant GWP team, be it a Regional Water Partnership (RWP), a Country Water Partnership (CWP), or a group of GWP partners, will designate a representative to supervise the facilitator's activities.

Multi-stakeholder input in this process is organised in a series of consultations that can take various forms. These consultations aim to agree on a shared list of water-related challenges and a related list of priority actions to contribute to solving the challenges, which should be included in the draft IWRM Action Plan. As the Action Plan is finalised and endorsed by the government and relevant partners, the facilitator should oversee the follow-up with the anchor institution(s), the relevant GWP office, and other key stakeholders until the successful conclusion of Stage 2.

What follows is a suggested set of deliverables, profile, timeline and list of detailed tasks for the facilitator at each step of Stage 2. This is a starting point that each country may customise according to its circumstances. Countries can, therefore, freely add to or take away from what follows to meet their needs.

Tentative timeline

There is no precise global timeframe set for implementing Stage 2 as this will be defined by needs and circumstances in each country. However, it is anticipated that Stage 2 may be completed over 6-9 months. An indicative timeline for this process can be found in document *2A Stage 2 Process Description*. Please note that the facilitator may potentially be hired for a shorter period than the overall duration of Stage 2. The total number of workdays depends on the context and the agreement with the RWP or CWP. In the past, facilitators have devoted between 30 and 60 work days to deliver their Terms of References (ToRs).

[1] Other additional consultants may also be necessary to achieve the desired results of Stage 2, working in collaboration with the facilitator.

Deliverables

1. Draft a detailed definition of the consultation process, including the proposed agenda of in-person or virtual consultations, means of capturing all suggested IWRM actions, and draft a list of stakeholders to be invited. Finalise the versions taking into account the input of the task force and the anchor institution(s).
2. Draft a baseline document summarising the main challenges (and preliminary identification of opportunities) related to enhancing IWRM, based on the input mentioned in document 2A. *Stage 2 Process Description*. The optional *Template Baseline Action Rationale Document (BARD)* may be used for this purpose. Finalise the versions taking into account the input of the task force and the anchor institution(s).
3. A summary of the first consultation, including prioritised water-related challenges and all related suggestions from participants for potential IWRM actions.
4. Updated agenda for subsequent consultations, taking into account the input from the first consultation.
5. A summary of the second consultation, including a summary of all prioritised IWRM actions.
6. A draft IWRM Action Plan, following the document *2E. SDG 6 IWRM Action Plan Outline*. The Action Plan should be produced in the preferred language of the country. A brief executive summary in English should be produced.
7. A final IWRM Action Plan, attending to all comments made on the draft version.
8. A final deliverable with editable electronic versions of all the materials generated during the consultancy, following the instructions in document *2A. Stage 2 Process Description*.

Facilitator's role in the *preparation* sub-stage:

1. Review in detail the guidance provided in the Acceleration Package and complete the online course on IWRM Action Planning, showing proof of completion (please see *2A. Stage 2 Process Description* for more information on the course)
2. Liaise with the designated GWP representative to contribute to the detailed definition of the consultation process, including potential ownership of the process, timeframe, suggested focus, methods to be employed, stakeholder composition, a draft agenda for the consultation(s) (see Annexe 1 for a template), working language(s), the venue(s) or platform and date(s) of consultation(s), a list of participants to be invited to take part in the process, taking into account criteria of sectoral, gender, age and other forms of diversity,[2] and considering the available resources, current circumstances of the country and common engagement mechanisms and any other relevant topic *(deliverable 1)*.
3. Draft a baseline document for discussion at the workshop, identifying the most pressing water-related challenges and possible solutions (*deliverable 2*). A list of primary pre-reading material can be found in document *2A. Stage 2 Process Description.*
4. Ensure that the invitation and the pre-reading materials (including the baseline document) are sent to all participants sufficiently in advance to facilitate their effective participation in the process. The time between the invitation being sent out and the holding of the process may vary from country to country. However, in general, the invitation should be sent to participants no later than two weeks before any event.
5. If needed and appropriate, individual consultations with key stakeholders and/or particularly marginalised groups may be held outside formal consultations to prepare appropriately for group conversations, align expectations and ensure as level a playing field as possible.

[2] Using document *2C. Guidelines for participation and inclusion*

6. Share *deliverable 2* with the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme, with the possibility of a first meeting being held with the global team to provide feedback on progress.

Facilitator's role in the *consultation and co-development* sub-stage

1. Prepare for, facilitate and follow-up on the consultations (as well as the task force meetings), under the lead of the anchor institution(s), and in coordination with the designated representative of GWP.
2. Identify clear roles and responsibilities between participants and organisers, referring to the elements needed to complete the Action Plan as outlined in document *2E. SDG 6 IWRM Action Plan Outline* (e.g. timeline, targets for each action, prospective funding sources, monitoring framework, etc.).
3. Ensure that all comments made during the consultations are duly noted. While notetaking may not be directly the facilitator's responsibility, the facilitator should ensure that this task is appropriately completed, especially if several parallel conversations occur. A recording of the conversation may be necessary for this purpose.
4. Produce summaries of each consultation, including all suggested IWRM actions from the first consultation *(deliverable 3)* and all prioritised actions from the second one (*deliverable 5)*.
5. During consultations, keep track of time to ensure that the conversations results in relevant and valuable conclusions, ensuring that all participants' perspectives are heard and taken into account, and that agreement is reached on clear decisions and next steps, including roles, responsibilities, follow-up actions and agreed deadlines.
6. Based on the first consultation, propose and broker an agreement on the precise means of prioritising actions to reach a consensual shortlist during subsequent consultation(s) and update the agenda for the second consultation *(deliverable 4).*
7. Produce and circulate the draft IWRM Action Plan and other key documents resulting from the consultations, in close collaboration with the task force and the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme *(deliverable 6)*, with the possibility of a meeting being held with the global team of the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme to review progress.
8. Finalise the IWRM Action Plan based on the feedback received and present it to the task force for formal approval *(deliverable 7)*.
9. Request participants to fill in, and organise the completion of, the evaluation forms (see Annexe 2).

Facilitator's role in the *formalisation* sub-stage

1. Facilitate the Stage 2 formalisation process in support of the task force, encouraging buy-in for the Action Plan.
2. Ensure clarity on follow-up actions with the task force.
3. Deliver a final package of all the materials generated during the consultancy to the designated representative of GWP *(deliverable 8)*.

Profile of the facilitator

- The facilitator should be well versed in the political, socioeconomic and environmental context of the country in question.
- They should speak and write fluently the country's main language and have an acceptable level of written and spoken English.
- Relevant advanced university degree in topics related to the scope of the consultancy

- Minimum 10 years' experience within or interfacing with water resources management, working at both a technical and governance level.
- Demonstrated experience in working within the framework of the SDGs.
- Solid experience in water-related programme development, strategic planning, objective setting within a logical framework and multi-stakeholder facilitation.
- If parts of the consultation process are to be held virtually, the facilitator should ideally have experience facilitating online meetings and be familiar with best practices in this field. Among other things, they should be aware of appropriate platforms, software and strategies to maximise the effectiveness of virtual processes.

Annexe 1: Template for the first Consultation Process definition and Agenda

Parts in italics are intended for guidance only and should be deleted after completing the template.

[The concept note should include the logos of the convening organisations]

First consultation on the development of an SDG IWRM Action Plan

Date and Venue

1. Background

Within the context of the *National Strategy* [Specify Name], the Government of [specify the name of the country], through [specify the name of the lead organisation] is organising a consultation on the development of an Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Action Plan, within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This activity is assisted by the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme, which is designed to assist countries in achieving a focused and coordinated approach to the monitoring and implementation of SDG Target 6.5 (implement IWRM at all levels by 2030) as measured through indicator 6.5.1. The overall objective of the Support Programme is the advancement of IWRM to foster the water-related improvements that will result in a tangible and sustainable impact on the ground. Such impact manifests itself through progress towards the other SDG 6 targets and broader water-related goals.

This consultation is a follow-up of the national consultation carried out on (date) on the current status of IWRM in [Name of the country] through a 33-question survey discussed, evaluated and reported to UN-Water. The results of this consultation can be found in the following document: link, and at the national level Link, and show the main challenges [Name of the country] is facing in terms of IWRM.

2. Objectives of the consultation

The main objective of the consultation is to identify and formulate priority actions that serve as appropriate responses to water resources management challenges, based on sector needs, national priorities, institutional and financial capacity, as well as on the survey results mentioned above. These actions should constitute an investment portfolio for the country to both invest in and attract additional financial support for the coming years.

In order to optimise ownership of the responses formulated during the consultation, a blend of partners representing national government agencies, civil society, universities, non-governmental organisations, the private sector and the donor community are invited to participate in defining the parameters and content of a first draft Action Plan.

The specific objectives of the consultation are:

1. To reach broad agreement on the process to be followed
2. To discuss and prioritise key water-related challenges
3. To brainstorm on possible interventions in response to the water-related challenges
4. To agree on the next steps, roles and timing

3. Tentative agenda

The final agenda for each consultation will be country- and context-specific. However, the focus should be placed on a process that will generate progress towards overall Stage 2 objectives. Some of the basic elements likely to be incorporated into the agenda for the first consultation include:

1. Welcome and purpose of the consultation

2. Introductions
3. Agreement on the agenda
4. Introduction to the SDGs, SDG 6, SDG target 6.5 and indicator 6.5.1
5. Presentation of baseline document and key materials
6. Introduction to the Action Plan outline, main points of note, and process for adoption as a national priority IWRM Action Plan
7. Discussion and prioritisation of key water-related challenges
8. Brainstorming on possible interventions, capturing all ideas
8. Agreement as far as possible on the above
9. Agreement on a process, including actions, roles and timing, for the adoption of the IWRM Action Plan

The agenda for the second workshop will be dependent on the process defined during the first workshop. It is, however, expected to focus on advancing the work accomplished by the task force following the first consultation, refine the prioritisation of interventions, review the presentation of the draft Action Plan, and discuss the next steps.

Annexe 2: Suggested consultation evaluation forms

This form may be customised as needed by the facilitator, in consultation with the designated GWP representative. The survey for target audience 1 is suggested to be used at the end of the Stage 2 process, whereas the survey for target audience 2 may be repeated after every consultation.

Target audience 1: Organisers

1. How well did the consultation(s) meet its/their objectives? -- Very much so/satisfactorily/partly/not much/not at all
2. How would you rate the support provided by GWP during the process? – scale 1 to 5 and N/A
3. How helpful was the guidance provided through the acceleration package? – scale 1 to 5 and N/A
4. How helpful was the Action Planning training? – scale 1 to 5 and N/A
5. How would you rate the overall participation during the consultations? – scale 1 to 5 and N/A
6. How well were the opinions of stakeholders integrated into the final Action Plan and related reports? – scale 1 to 5 and N/A
7. What worked well in the process of consultation that should be replicated in the future? Open text
8. How could GWP improve in supporting future IWRM Action Planning such as this one? Open text
8. What was/were the main follow-up(s) to the consultation? Open text
9. Please let us know if you have any other comments or thoughts about the process. Open text

Target audience 2: Participants

1. How well did the consultation meet its objectives? -- scale 1 to 5, 5 being highest
2. Did you feel that the consultation process was well organised? – scale 1 to 5, 5 being highest
3. To what extent did you feel that your opinions were taken into account in the consultation? – scale 1 to 5, 5 being highest
5. To what extent are your opinions reflected in the final IWRM Action Plan? – scale 1 to 5, 5 being highest To what extent, from your perspective, will the final product of the consultation accelerate IWRM implementation nationally? – scale 1 to 5, 5 being highest
6. How could GWP and the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme improve in supporting future processes such as this one? Open text
8. Please let us know if you have any other comments or thoughts about the process. Open text

SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme

IWRM Acceleration Package

2.C Guidelines for effective multi-stakeholder participation and inclusion

October 2021

Why Engage Multiple Stakeholders in IWRM

Multi-stakeholder participation and dialogue are embedded within the basic definitions of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM). To "promote the coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources in order to maximise economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems and the environment"[1], it is imperative that stakeholders whose decisions affect and those who are affected by those resources be brought together in an open and constructive dialogue.

Participants in multi-stakeholder consultations on SDG 6.5.1

To contribute to the drafting and formalisation of the national IWRM Action Plan during Stage 2, stakeholders relevant to the national context should be invited to take part in the consultation process, including one or more in-person or virtual multi-stakeholder workshops or consultations. This helps to increase collective ownership of decision-making processes, resulting in a robust and inclusive Action Plan. To ensure a broad, balanced and consensual set of water-related actions, it is suggested that the following stakeholders, from different sectors and levels, be considered as potential participants in this process:

- **Central government authorities:** representatives from the main ministry/ministries responsible for water resources, as well as those from other government authorities involved in or with an impact on water issues (e.g. agriculture/livestock, forestry, energy, environment, tourism, urban planning, sanitation, finance, climate change, risk management, health, etc.). Potentially also relevant parliamentarians with an interest in environmental/ water issues.

- **Basin, aquifer, protected area, and city-level authorities:** local governments, protected area representatives and organisations with responsibility for water resources management or oversight at the river basin, lake basin, or aquifer level. This should also include representatives of relevant IWRM-related projects. The Stage 2 process should engage broad geographical perspectives within the country. Good communication with users at all levels is key to the success of the process.

- **Academic and scientific community:** academic institutions, universities, research institutions, think tanks, and other bodies with relevant information, studies, data and analyses on different aspects of water resources.

- **Civil society**: non-governmental organisations, community groups, water user associations, environmental organisations, citizen science initiatives, and/or farmer organisations focusing on water resources.

- **United Nations Country Teams and entities in the country:** UN entities most relevant for sustainable development, the environment, social considerations and economic development: https://unsdg.un.org/un-in-action/country-level.

- **Those in charge of transboundary water issues:** including representatives of official government bodies and/or coordination mechanisms that deal with transboundary aquifers or river basins.

- **GWP partners in your country**: GWP's partners represent a range of different stakeholders concerned with IWRM, from different sectors: https://www.gwp.org/en/partner/existing-partners/Partner-Search/

[1] Definition of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) used by GWP, see: https://www.gwp.org/en/gwp-SAS/ABOUT-GWP-SAS/WHY/About-IWRM/v

- **Cap-Net partners in your country**: water-focused capacity development networks and organisations: http://www.cap-net.org/networks-partnerships/

- **Financial/Donor community:** foundations, bilateral and multilateral cooperation bodies, regional and/or global development banks and other financiers with whom opportunities identified in this process for strengthening IWRM implementation may be aligned. It is important to include these stakeholders from the outset because of the need for financing to implement the Action Plan.

- **Business and industry:** Companies with a significant environmental, social and economic footprint, which provide innovative water solutions and/or have a stated interest in water issues, be they from the beverage, food, mining, energy, paper, consumer products, tourism or other related sectors.

- **National focal points for other water-related SDG targets and indicators**: government officials named focal points for each SDG target and indicator related to water (not just under SDG 6). Contact details for SDG 6 focal points should be available through official government channels, may be obtained from the UN-Water International Monitoring Initiative website, or can be provided by GWPO upon request.

- **Gender advocacy groups:** Dublin Principle 3[2] highlights that "Women play a central part in the provision, management and safeguarding of water." Gender discrimination can limit women's chances of accessing vital water resources. Limiting participation in water resources management based on gender can often result in unfair and self-perpetuating impacts on the lives of women and men. Limited participation may, in turn, lead to further forms of marginalisation and reduce access to productive resources. Identifying and engaging gender-based organisations in IWRM can mean that opportunities and benefits of water-related interventions are equally available to both men and women. The Support Programme recently concluded a study on key bottlenecks and enablers to mainstreaming gender in WRM. The full report and a policy brief are available here. Furthermore, GWP's Gender Action Piece provides actionable recommendations on how to enhance gender mainstreaming. Action Area 3 on *meaningful and inclusive participation in decision-making and partnerships* of the Gender Action Piece provides particularly useful information and recommendations applicable to the design of the multi-stakeholder processes for IWRM action planning.

- **Vulnerable groups, including indigenous peoples:** Institutions and organised groups representing the rights, interests and perspectives of vulnerable groups, as defined in the SDG 6.5.1 survey. It is particularly important to hear the voice of indigenous peoples, given that the land they traditionally occupy is estimated to contain most of the world's remaining biodiversity. It is important to note that workshop(s) may need to accommodate languages other than the predominant national language.

- **Young people:** Engaging both youth[3] and young professionals[4] can increase the quality and relevance of water-related initiatives, policies and programmes, as they can provide innovative information, ideas and solutions. Youth organisations engaged in water or sustainable development can be a good starting point for identifying the best participants. Young people are not a homogenous group and can include a range of backgrounds such as

[2] See https://www.gwp.org/contentassets/05190d0c938f47d1b254d6606ec6bb04/dublin-rio-principles.pdf

[3] Different organisations have differing definitions of youth. GWP recognizes youth as young people aged 15-35, whereas the UN typically considers youth as being between the ages of 15 and 24.

[4] "Young professionals" refers to recent graduates under the age of 35 who have some work experience, according to the GWP Youth Strategy.

researchers, civil society, indigenous tribes, entrepreneurs, and young water professionals. Please have a look at GWP's Youth Engagement Strategy for more information.

Use of virtual tools for inclusive and participatory multi-stakeholder processes

Consultations may take place through several in-person and or virtual means. Technological advances have made it possible for people to collaborate on the same documents in real-time. You may use what follows as a source of ideas to guide you in designing online stakeholder engagement processes.

Options for online interaction

The following online alternatives may be combined in the most appropriate way for your country.

- **Written inputs**: this may involve asking stakeholders to provide written contributions in addition to formal consultations. An email address or simple online form may be used to collect ideas from a more significant number of participants.
- **Focus groups**: Smaller online stakeholder group workshops could be organised to discuss aspects of the process. This might be a short, focused session or a series of sessions to consolidate shared understandings and move towards consensus, ideally using video software.
- **Semi-structured interpersonal consultations**: For more direct contact, interviews with a handful of key individuals may be facilitated to get a broader understanding of a country's opportunities and challenges.
- **Discussion fora**: Key matters may be put to consultation by a broader public, perhaps through a pre-registration process. This can allow a much deeper dive into key aspects that can foster a shared understanding between a larger number of participants.
- **Online polling**: As a possible complement to a deeper analysis by a smaller group of participants, quantitative and qualitative feedback from a larger group may be possible through online polling. This may be particularly useful for the prioritisation process.
- **Online consultation(s)**: Online workshops or consultations can be organised to build on inputs provided through various mechanisms listed above. Online workshops or consultations may be divided up over consecutive days, if required, and should be shorter in duration than in-person workshops. If circumstances and national/local health guidelines permit, it may be possible for some individuals to participate in person, while others may participate online, in a hybrid scheme.

Possible online meeting platforms and tools

A brief list of some possible communication platforms and tools is provided below. Government departments and individuals may have their preferred platforms, and there is no need to adopt new platforms if effective or known systems are already in place. For larger consultations, the involvement of facilitators specialising in the use of such tools might be beneficial.

- Two people or small groups: e.g. telephone, Skype, WhatsApp, Telegram, Zoom, Facetime, etc.

- Online meetings/workshops (with or without video): e.g. MS Teams, WebEx, GoToMeeting, Skype for Business, Zoom, Google Meet or social media live streaming (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, or YouTube).
- Online polling: e.g. Survey Monkey, Google Forms, Kahoot, Pollev, Slido, or FormStack.
- Discussion fora: e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn.
- Shared brainstorming: Miro, Google docs.

How to design an effective multi-stakeholder process

The SDG 6.5.1 IWRM Support Programme reviewed and analysed the documentation on the multi-stakeholder processes (MSPs) for SDG 6.5.1 monitoring in the 61 countries supported through the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme. Consultation modalities included in-person, online and hybrid forms. The in-depth analysis is available here. A policy brief highlights the main factors to increase the legitimacy of MSPs and includes some considerations to take into account for all consultation modalities.

Some summary recommendations from the brief are provided below:

Criterion	Recommendations and good practices
Stakeholder inclusion	• Ensure sectoral diversity by including representatives from different sectors and ministries and take into account different sub-sectors that are included within the IWRM survey (e.g. gender, transboundary water issues, the private sector, vulnerable groups). • Ensure geographic diversity to reflect that decisions are made at various levels (local, basin, regional, national, and international). • Ideally participants should include representatives from public bodies (such as state ministries and regional water authorities), civil society, the private sector, and non-governmental organisations engaged in water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) activities. • Participants should also be diverse in terms of gender, age groups, ethnic groups, and traditionally marginalised groups
Procedural fairness	• Ensure that every participant has relevant information before engaging in the consultation process. Send information in advance and be available prior to and after meetings for questions and clarifications. • Strengthen the capacity of traditionally marginalised groups to empower them to participate effectively. For example, pre-workshop meetings can be organised for 'non-experts' to become familiar with technical terms and jargon. • Consider longer workshop events and/or engagement periods, as this may provide more opportunities for stakeholders to raise their issues and priorities during discussions. However, understand that that this could have detrimental effects on inclusion, since some stakeholders may not be able to commit to the amount of time requested.

Consensual orientation	• Create an environment geared towards consensual orientation by using various methods to increase group cohesion, e.g. trust-building exercises, focus group discussions followed by feedback sessions, or creative problem structuring methods such as abstraction and visioning exercises or those based on Liberating Structures. • Consider holding workshops over several days rather than a few hours or longer consultation engagement periods to give stakeholders more time to share their views and build a sense of mutual understanding and trust.
Transparency	• Make available the data and documents that express, in sufficient detail, the different stages of the consultation, highlighting debates and scoring in a fair manner. • Share the agenda in advance, take minutes of the meetings, note who took part, communicate the meeting outputs and share summaries of the discussions, including what was said, by whom, and how the scores were compiled. • Use tools such as satisfaction surveys, in addition to general feedback sessions, to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the consultation process and how they can be made more effective.

SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme

IWRM Acceleration Package

2.D Action Planning and Prioritisation of Actions

October 2021

What is an IWRM Action Plan?

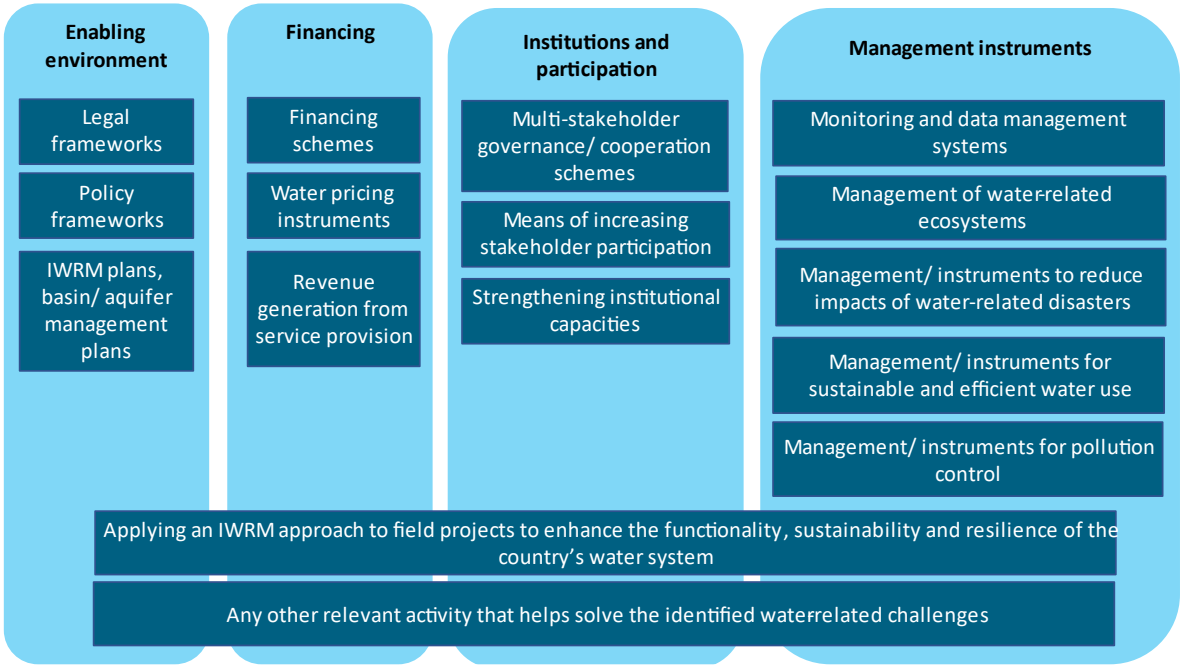
An IWRM Action Plan is a shared multi-annual commitment from different stakeholders in the country to advance IWRM implementation as a contribution to achieving the water-related SDGs. It should contain a limited number of priority interventions designed to help solve some of the country's most significant water-related challenges. These actions should be ambitious investment opportunities that shift the needle on SDG 6.5.1 and other water-related SDGs. They should attract funding and support from national public and private sectors and international donors. An Action Plan should be realistic and business-like in its framing and approach.

An IWRM Action Plan should not be a new fully-fledged national IWRM plan but rather be subordinate and supportive to the existing policy framework for IWRM. It should contain a portfolio of government-endorsed water-related actions defined through a multi-stakeholder dialogue process and employing an IWRM approach. It should also not be a stand-alone document, separate from ongoing efforts to reach the water-related SDGs, climate adaptation goals, biodiversity targets and other relevant frameworks. Since each country presents a different set of circumstances, there is no one-size-fits-all "recipe" for producing an IWRM Action Plan. If a country has an existing national IWRM plan or similar, Stage 2 may focus on identifying the appropriate implementation pathway for some aspects of that plan. This could for example consist of fostering multi-stakeholder support to accelerate interventions from that plan that may be quick wins or "low-hanging fruits". If a country has no national IWRM plan, Stage 2 may identify the need to formally establish such a plan, or to ensure that an IWRM approach is inserted into the country's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) or National Adaptation Plan (NAP), among other interventions contemplated in Stage 3. Similarly, if a country has an outdated national IWRM plan, the updating of that plan could be a Stage 3 activity that could be prioritised in Stage 2.

Contents of an IWRM Action Plan

An IWRM Action Plan should contain a *shortlist* of priority actions that can be feasibly funded and implemented within an agreed timeframe (a separate "long list" of other actions identified through the Stage 2 process can be maintained for future consideration). The Action Plan's ambition should be balanced with realism, acknowledging that full IWRM implementation and outcome-level results may take much longer than the suggested timeframe of the Action Plan (typically 3-5 years, with a suggested bi-annual or yearly follow-up to ensure proper monitoring and evaluation). The shortlist of actions should have a basic monitoring framework and a theory of change explaining how they would contribute to solving water-related challenges. That basic monitoring framework can be defined at the level of the entire Action Plan or for groups of related actions, depending on the thematic and geographic relationship between actions.

Potential areas of actions



They may be national, sub-national or transboundary in scope. The Action Plan should explain the context of these interventions, responsible actors, human resources, timeframe and potential or actual funding sources, and an appropriate management framework and coordination mechanism(s) to facilitate their implementation, follow-up and evaluation. Action data sheets are included as an annexe to the Action Plan, and additional concept briefs may be prepared if required, in order to present the actions attractively and thus improve their bankability.

The IWRM Action Plan should build on existing national plans, programmes, processes and priorities, to help ensure that the solutions contribute to existing commitments, thus increasing resource efficiency and impact. The extent to which the work engages with aspects beyond SDG 6.5.1 is at the discretion of each country. Examples of the entry points that the Stage 2 process might link to include:

- formal existing or planned national water governance-related initiatives, such as national or sub-national IWRM plans
- climate-related priorities, as exemplified by the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) or Green Climate Fund projects, among others
- national biodiversity-related targets, such as those under the post-2020 global biodiversity framework
- disaster risk reduction initiatives such as those under the Sendai Framework
- other national and regional sustainable development frameworks, investment programmes or related socioeconomic development projects, either under implementation or in the pipeline
- ongoing water governance reform processes
- ongoing governance reform processes with an emphasis on strengthening participation and inclusion of all stakeholders, including marginalized and vulnerable groups, in planning and decision-making processes

The Support Programme strongly emphasises multi-stakeholder engagement and dialogue to achieve a holistic perspective on water management challenges, increasing the likelihood of buy-in from a wide range of actors. Recognising the importance of "no decision about us without us", **it is anticipated that an IWRM Action Plan should strongly reflect the results of diverse stakeholder input from in-person and/or virtual stakeholder consultations or workshops.** Recognising this multi-stakeholder nature, each action may be supported and implemented by one or more organisations in coordination with the central government.

Gender-responsive Action Planning

Given the important role that women play in water resource management, it is crucial that both the process and the outcomes of Stage 2 are gender-responsive and should aim to actively support the mainstreaming of gender into water resources management at all stages, in line with SDG 5 on gender equality.[1]

Prioritising actions

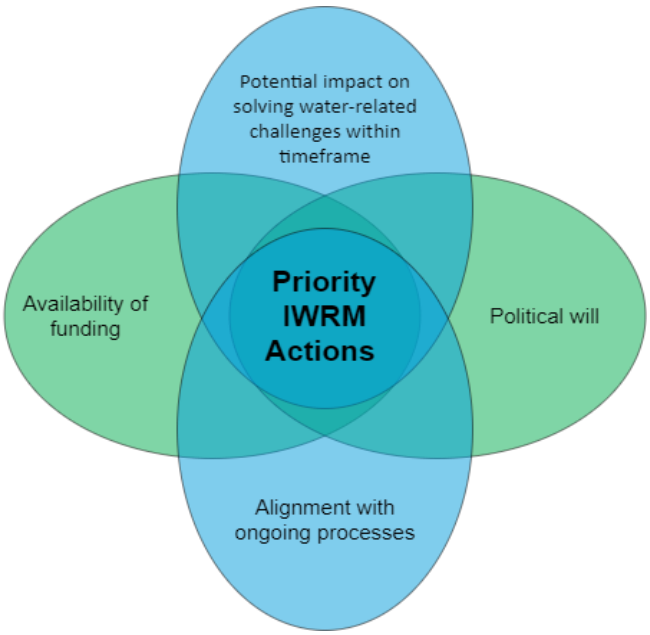
Key to the success of this process is the **prioritisation** of appropriate interventions to address identified water-related challenges. While the prioritisation criteria for potential interventions might differ from one country to another, the following graphic suggests a simplified set of four criteria. One suggested means of transparently engaging stakeholders in this prioritisation is to use a simple spreadsheet (See Annexe 1) or online voting system for participants to rank the potential actions against these criteria (or others of the country's choice). Those scoring above a pre-defined total (perhaps 75 per cent) would be the most likely to generate the desired impacts and would therefore be the priority interventions considered for the IWRM Action Plan. When prioritising actions, it is suggested that the Valuing Water Principles (see box) could be regarded as inspiration, since using the shared values between participants may highlight actions that could have greater long-term impact. It should be noted that GWP has committed in its 2020-2025 Strategy to supporting the incorporation of the multiple values of water in decision making.

Valuing Water Principles

These principles, adopted by the United Nations High-Level Panel on Water, may be considered when prioritising the potential interventions (see here for more information):

1. Recognize and embrace water's multiple values
2. Reconcile values and build trust
3. Protect the sources
4. Educate to empower
5. Invest and innovate

Annexe 1: Example for Prioritisation Matrix



Potential Actions	**Political will** (1-10, 10 being the highest)	**Alignment with ongoing processes** (1-10, 10 being the highest)	**Availability of funding** (1-10, 10 being the highest)	**Potential impact** (1-10, 10 being the highest)	**Total** (Sum of scores per action)
Action 1					
Action 2					
Action 3					
…					

SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme

IWRM Acceleration Package

2.E IWRM Action Plan Outline

October 2021

Important preliminary note

This outline is meant to facilitate the completion of the IWRM Action Plan for your country as the key output of Stage 2 of the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme. This document should guide and facilitate the acceleration of IWRM implementation in your country. The following outline is generic and designed to be customised according to the needs of each country, as well as the varying national contexts and frameworks within which the work is being embedded. While acknowledging that there is no one-size-fits-all structure, the outline suggests standard sections that should be covered within this plan. The text in italics currently included under the outline headings provides guidance on the purpose and content of the different sections and should be deleted during completion and replaced with the content of the Action Plan.

Once approved by the anchor institution(s), the Action Plan should be shared with the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme, who will promote it on its website https://www.gwp.org/en/sdg6support/.

0. Cover page

The first page of the IWRM Action Plan should be a cover page, including the title of the Action Plan, the country, the date of publication, and showing the shield, flag or emblem of the country, among other virtual elements appropriate for such a cover page. More details about the anchor institution(s), contact points, etc., may be included on the inside cover.

1. Executive Summary

Purpose

To summarise the document's contents, highlight some priority areas, and provide the reader with an introduction to the overall scope of the Action Plan.

Suggested content - (see the template in Annexe 2)

- *Background Information on the process and stakeholders Involved*
- *Priority solution areas and related priority objectives identified*
- *Transition towards implementation: Overview of timeline, responsibilities and next steps*

2. Strategic context

Purpose

To describe the context within which the plan was developed and will be implemented. [Note that the plan should not describe in detail the state of water resources or management in the country, as this information is available in abundance elsewhere. Instead, it is framed around key action areas required to accelerate sustainable and equitable water resources management, including the current and desired status of SDG indicator 6.5.1.]

Suggested content

- *Brief overview of the current status of SDG in the country connected (directly or indirectly) with water resources management*
- *Relevant national existing/ planned policies, programmes and initiatives*
- *Findings from the SDG 6.5.1 survey listed by IWRM dimension*
- *Relationship with other water-related targets (under SDG 6, under other SDGs, and other related instruments such as the Paris Agreement, the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, the Sendai Framework, and/or others)*
- *Relevant government institutions and other stakeholders involved with IWRM*
- *Relevant government or multi-stakeholder planning objectives aligned with or supportive of, IWRM*
- *Existing funding frameworks anticipated to be utilised*

3. Overarching goal and priority objectives

Purpose

To summarise the overall ambition of the plan, the overarching goal, and related high-level objectives it is aiming to address.

Suggested content

- *The main goal of the plan (i.e. to support the accelerated implementation of IWRM as a means of advancing progress on priority issues that intersect with related SDG targets and broader water-related goals)*
- *Outline of a general Theory of Change, explaining why the identified priority objectives are relevant to achieving the Action Plan's main goal and how they contribute towards achieving the main goal of the plan.*

- *List of priority solution areas and related priority objectives to be reached, including the rationale and link to SDGs (target 6.5 on IWRM as well as other SDG 6 targets and broader water-related goals)*

4. Overview of actions

Purpose

To describe and contextualise the list of prioritised actions identified to meet the plan's objectives

Suggested content

- *A detailed list of actions categorised by priority issue, including a tangible link to the relevant elements of SDG indicator 6.5.1*

Below is an example of how a summary table of key IWRM Actions could be structured. This can be adapted to meet the specific requirements of the Action Plan. In addition, Annex 1 of this document contains a suggested datasheet for a more detailed description of each of the identified actions. The rows in the table below should be copied to fit the number of priority objectives and actions identified.

#	Title of the action	Brief description of the action	Expected results	Realisation Time	Lead organisation to ensure action takes place	Estimated costs and source of funding	Water-related aspects targeted (e.g. link to SDG indicator 6.5.1 elements and other water-related targets)	Contact person
[Priority objective 1, from section 3]								
1.1	[Please provide a short and communicative title for the action that would contribute to achieving the stated objective]	[Please provide a high-level summary of the action]	[Please describe the expected results of the action]	[Quarters, months or specific dates, as appropriate]	[Which organisation will be responsible for leading the implementation of this action if already identified. What commitments has that organisation made]	[If identified]	[Please mention the question or section of the SDG 6.5.1 survey and/or other water-related targets, including other SDG targets, those under the Paris Climate Agreement, Convention for Biological Diversity, among others]	[Name, email]

1.2	[Rows should be added as needed]							

5. Budget

Purpose

To specify the overall cost of implementing the Action Plan and the anticipated and required funding sources and additional resources needed (e.g. human resources). Annex 3 includes a budget template for the IWRM Action Plan and referenced here.

Suggested content

- *Cost per action, if possible, with a breakdown by year*
- *Sources of funding from government and other relevant country stakeholders (with the distinction between confirmed and aspirational and in-cash and in-kind)*
- *If additional funding is required, the fundraising plan or intentions should be mentioned*

6. Monitoring and evaluation framework

Purpose

To monitor progress and to present the results related to the priority actions, a monitoring framework can provide a basis to increase accountability among responsible actors. It is not expected that there should be a detailed Logical Framework for all actions available at the time when the IWRM Action Plan is established. Therefore, we do encourage the use of a simplified basic monitoring framework at the results level, which can be complemented over time with detailed Logical Frameworks of each action. Monitoring of the Action Plan could also be streamlined with monitoring and reporting processes for SDG 6.5.1 to avoid duplications. Annex 4 provides a basic monitoring framework that can be used and adapted as needed.

Suggested content

- *Suggested monitoring process and accountability mechanism (incl. monitoring and reporting responsibilities for each action, stakeholders involved and details of how progress is reported, potentially including targets and indicators) and the timeline for revision (possibly based on periodic reporting on SDG indicator 6.5.1)*
- *Responsible institutions for coordinating and ensuring follow-up and monitoring on the Action Plan*

7. Risks and mitigation strategies

Purpose

To provide confidence in the plan's feasibility and robustness. Annex 5 provides a template for conducting a risk assessment.

Suggested content

- *Identification of the hazards, as well as internal and external risks to the successful implementation of the plan*
- *Formulation of the control measures to reduce high/medium level risks identified.*
- *Description of the contingency actions proposed should the identified risk occur*

8. Roles and responsibilities

Purpose

To formalise institutional tasks and commitments and increase accountability for overall plan implementation.

Suggested content

- *List of the mandated institutions and other stakeholders responsible for plan implementation including:*

  - *ultimate responsibility (owner of the plan)*
  - *responsible organisations for different tasks/actions (including monitoring)*
- *Coordination mechanisms among different actors*

9. Timeline and next steps

Purpose

To ensure that the plan is time-bound and prioritised.

Suggested content

- *The detailed timeline including key milestones during the implementation period*
- *Immediate next steps to kick-start implementation*

Annexe 1: Action data sheets

There should be one more elaborate description per identified action. Each description should ideally be no more than 1.5 pages in length. However, this is open to adjustment, based on the format of the Action Plan. Complementary concept notes, briefs or additional information on each priority action may also be included. Examples of existing action data sheets can be viewed in the IWRM Action Searcher.

[Priority objective 1]:
Action 1.1: [Copy from the summary table above]
Brief description of the action: [Copy from the summary table above]
Expected results: [Copy from the summary table above]
Rationale: [The main reasons or justification for taking action]
Approach: [How the objective will be achieved]
Realisation time: [Copy from the summary table above]
Lead organisation to ensure action takes place: [Copy from the summary table above] **Key supporting organisations:** [Other organisations, with a brief mention of roles]
Water-related aspects targeted (e.g., link to SDG indicator 6.5.1 elements and other water-related targets): [Copy from the summary table above]
Level of action [national, sub-national or transboundary]
Estimated costs and source of funding: Estimated number of human resources in person-days (time): ____ (sum of number of days spent on the project by all human resources) Total estimated budget needed: USD_____ Planned contribution from [the national budget]: USD_____ Planned contribution from [other sources]: USD_____
Key contact for action: [Name, Surname, Title, Organisation, Email, Phone number]

Annexe 2: Template for Executive Summary of IWRM Action Plan

Background Information on the Process and Stakeholders Involved

- Briefly explain the **context** in which the plan was developed, highlighting its relevance in achieving SDG 6 targets within the country and mentioning relevant national, regional and/or international frameworks that it aligns with.
- Mention the **stakeholders** involved in the task force, the size of the consultation group, and other consultation mechanisms employed.
- Briefly highlight the **process** followed to prioritise the shortlist of actions from the long list of possible actions raised.
- Outline of how **gender and social inclusion** considerations have been mainstreamed throughout the planning process.

Priority actions identified

- Outline the priority issues that the country is aiming to address through the IWRM Action Plan.
- Outline of how **gender and social inclusion** considerations have been mainstreamed in the different actions of the Action Plan.
- List the key actions to address, including the rationale and link to the SDGs (target 6.5 on IWRM and other SDG 6 targets and broader water-related goals). The actions should be either described in a narrative context or presented in a tabular format.

Transition towards implementation

- Highlight the means through which the country plans to implement the IWRM Action Plan, including roles and responsibilities.
- A high-level budget requirement should ideally be mentioned, including likely funding sources.
- Provide a brief overview of the timeline and next steps.

Template for Summary tabular format:

Priority Objective	Action	Implementation Steps	Timeline	Actors Responsible for Execution	Proposed Budget	Funding source[1]	SDG 6.5.1 Dimension	Other SDG Targets achieved

[1] Clarify if funding source is confirmed or aspirational

Annexe 3: Budget

Below in excel format a budget template, which can be copied here once completed.

Template%201.%20I
WRM%20ACTION%2

Annexe 4: Monitoring and evaluation framework

#	Title of the action	Expected results	Indicators	Target	Means of verification	Frequency of verification	Risks and assumptions
1	*[Please provide the title of the action]*	*[Please describe the expected result from the action]*	*[Please list the indicators measuring progress towards the result]*	*[Please define the target value of the indicator]*	*[Please provide information on how progress against the indicator will be measured]*	*[Please provide information on the frequency of measuring progress against the indicator]*	*[Please list the underlying assumptions and main risks related to the action]*
2							
3							
4	*[Rows should be added as needed]*						

Annexe 5: Risk assessment

Risk Assessment

Hazard identified *(Delete examples)*	Risk(s) involved	Estimated level of risk*
Example: Loss of funding source	*Example: Halt of the 'action/project name'*	*Example: Medium*
[Rows should be added as needed]		

**For each hazard, estimate the:*

- *Likelihood of it happening - High / Medium / Low / Negligible*
- *Consequence if it does - Severe / Medium / Low / Negligible*

Then use the matrix below to identify the appropriate level of risk

		LIKELIHOOD OF HAZARD			
		High	**Medium**	**Low**	**Negligible**
CONSEQUENCE OF HAZARD	**Severe**	**High**	**High**	**Medium**	**Effectively Zero**
	Medium	**High**	**Medium**	**Medium/Low**	**Effectively Zero**
	Low	**Medium/Low**	**Low**	**Low**	**Effectively Zero**
	Negligible	**Effectively Zero**	**Effectively Zero**	**Effectively Zero**	**Effectively Zero**

Enter the appropriate level of risk against each hazard listed.

1. Hazards that are considered low risk or effectively zero probably need no further documentation, although it is important that these risks are drawn to the attention of anyone working on the implementation of the action(s).

2. Where medium or high levels of risk have been identified you should record the control measures that are (or will be) in place to reduce the risk to an acceptable level in the table below. Your first choice should be to avoid the hazard if possible. If it is not possible then please detail steps to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

Medium/High Risk	Risk mitigation strategy

[Rows should be added as needed]	

Contingency Planning

Please describe here what will be done in case of the unforeseen circumstances

Annexe 6: Participants' List

Please fill in the relevant information below. With regards to the type of actor, choose the most appropriate from the following options:

- *National Government/Agency*
- *Local Government*
- *International Organisation*
- *NGO*
- *Academia*
- *Private Sector*
- *Civil Society/Other*

With regards to gender, please choose among the following options:

- *Male*
- *Female*
- *Other*

Number	Name and Surname	Organisation	Designation/ Position	Email	Type of Actor	Gender
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
…						

Annexe 7: Agenda

[Please insert here the agendas for the consultations]

Annexe 8: Photos

[Please include any photos from the consultations here, or email them as attachments to sdg6iwrmsp@gwp.org. People in these pictures should have at least consented verbally to being pictured.]