

## GWP SPONSORING PARTNERS

21<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the Sponsoring Partners  
to the Global Water Partnership Organisation

Stockholm, Sweden

Wednesday, June 22, 2022

### MINUTES

*Approved electronically by September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022*

### **1. Welcome and Introduction, Apologies Received, Quorum Confirmed & Approval of Agenda**

The Chair of GWP, Amb. Howard Bamsey, opened the Annual GWP Sponsoring Partners meeting 2022 and welcomed all participants, both in person as well as online. The Chair extended a special welcome to the new Chair of the Sponsoring Partners, Ms. Sigrun Rawet, Head of Global Agenda Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sweden. Ms. Rawet took over the Chairmanship from Ms. Camilla Nevstad Bruzelius, who had taken up a new position outside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Chair of the GWP Sponsoring Partners meeting, Ms. Sigrun Rawet, continued by also warmly welcoming all participants, and then invited everyone for a quick "round the table" introduction.

#### **1.1: Apologies received**

Ms. Rawet noted that apologies for the 21<sup>st</sup> Sponsoring Partners meeting had been received from Denmark, Netherlands and WMO.

#### **1.2: Quorum confirmed**

Ms. Rawet further confirmed that a quorum of Sponsoring Partners was reached.

#### **1.3: Approval of Agenda**

***Decision: The meeting Agenda was approved.***

### **2. Matters arising/updates from Minutes from the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Sponsoring Partners in Stockholm on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

The Chair of the Sponsoring Partners noted that, according to the procedure of electronic approval of the Sponsoring Partners Minutes on a no objection basis after each meeting, the Minutes from the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Sponsoring Partners Meeting had been approved as of August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

No further comments related to the Minutes were raised.

#### **2.1: Update on decisions taken since last SP meeting**

The four decisions made electronically by the Sponsoring Partners since the last SP meeting were noted.

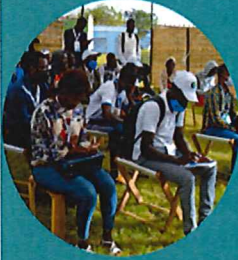
	Decision	Adoption date
1	The Minutes of the Sponsoring Partners meeting 29 <sup>th</sup> June 2021 were approved.	25 <sup>th</sup> August 2021
2	5 nominated new GWP Steering Committee members were appointed, on a no objection basis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ms. Charafat Afailal, Morocco</li> <li>▪ Ms. Ndey Bakurin, Gambia</li> <li>▪ Ms. Paulette Bynoe, Guyana</li> <li>▪ Mr. Christopher Ilagan, Philippines</li> <li>▪ Ms. Nchedi Moripe, South Africa</li> </ul> The 5 new Steering Committee members will take up their positions as of the December 2021 Steering Committee meeting.	16 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
3	The one year extension of the term of the GWP Chair, Mr. Howard Bamsey, from January 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2022 to January 5 <sup>th</sup> , 2023 was approved on a no objection basis.	16 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
4	The launch of the search for a new GWP Chair was approved on a no objection basis.	16 <sup>th</sup> September 2021

### 3. Information and Approval of GWP Reports

#### 3.1: GWP Annual Activity and Financial Reports 2021

The GWP Executive Secretary, Mr. Darío Soto-Abril, presented an overview of GWP's most significant activities and impact made during last year:

**Mobilising youth for water management**



GWP launched the **Water Academy for Youth (W.A.Y.)** giving young professionals the opportunity to realise their potential by becoming influencers and leaders. Another key platform is the **Youth for Water and Climate (YWC)**, which launched two events in 2021: the **YWC Programme for Youth leaders in Climate and Water**, and a call for projects for the **2<sup>nd</sup> Global Youth Take Action**.

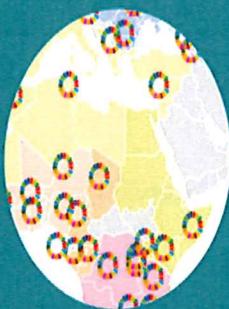
### Climate resilience through water



Mobilising Change:  
10 years of  
climate resilient  
water investments

GWP-supported applications worth more than US\$2 million were approved to access the Green Climate Fund Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme. In February 2021, African Union Heads of State adopted the Continental Africa Water Investment Programme. GWP achievements in the climate and water space are documented in 'Mobilising Change: 10 years of climate resilient water investments'.

### Water solutions for the SDGs




GWP focused on increasing the impact of the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme. 2021 saw the preparation and launch of a global report on the status of SDG 6.5.1, highlighting that the world needs to at least double its current rate of progress towards IWRM implementation to reach the 2030 goal.

### Redevelopment of the GWP IWRM Toolbox



Drawing on extensive research of its users, the **GWP Toolbox IWRM Action Hub** was redeveloped in 2021. The long-term goal is for the Toolbox to become a leading knowledge-sharing platform that brings together water professionals in designing and implementing IWRM action towards a water secure world.

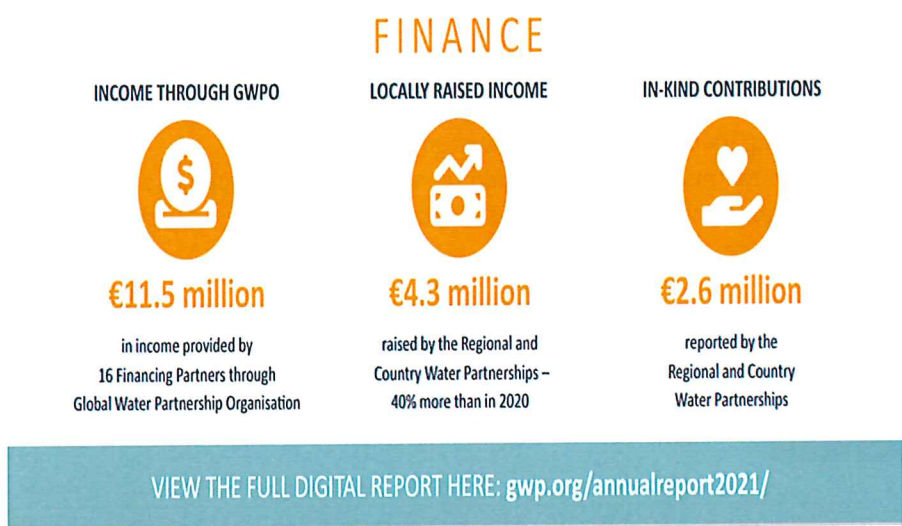
### Transboundary water cooperation



Five regional organisations and more than 10 transboundary water management institutions were supported by GWP. The **Massive Open Online Course** on transboundary freshwater security, which was launched in 2020, continued to expand in 2021 – attracting over 2,300 participants from 150 countries. The course is rolling out more language versions to reach a larger audience.

The Executive Secretary encouraged all Sponsoring Partners to have a look at GWP’s Interactive map ([Interactivemap - GWP](#)) where water governance results influenced by GWP can be easily accessible.

Ms. Elena Trovesi, Chief Financial and Administration Officer, presented the Annual Financial Report for 2021.



***Decision: The GWP Annual Activity Report 2021 and the GWP Annual Financial Report 2021 of the Steering Committee to the Sponsoring Partners were received and approved by the Sponsoring Partners.***

### 3.2: GWP Audit Report 2021

The Chief Financial and Administration Officer noted that GWPO, yet again, had received an unqualified Audit Report and Management Letter.

*The GWP Audit Report and Management Letter 2021 were received and considered by the Sponsoring Partners.*

### 3.3: Discharge of liability of the Steering Committee Members and the Executive Secretary

*Decision: The recommendation of the GWP Auditors to discharge the GWP Steering Committee Members and the Executive Secretary of liability for 2021 was approved by the Sponsoring Partners.*

## 4. Approval of External Auditors

According to the GWPO Statutes, a new Audit firm should be appointed every 5 years. On May 19th, 2015, the Sponsoring Partners appointed Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC) as Auditors for GWPO.

A new Audit firm would therefore have been appointed in 2020, but for various reasons that did not happen.

Instead, GWPO issued a tender for a new firm to provide auditing services in 2022. Three organizations submitted their tender applications: KPMG AB, Kreston Albania, Lochan & Co. After a review done by the selection committee, none of the firms were found to have submitted satisfactory proposals. One of the firms (KPMG AB) was outside the budget range. The other two were firms with limited international exposure and no knowledge of Swedish Accounting rules and practices, nor present in Sweden.

Due to the situation presented above, GWPO asked for the Sponsoring Partners' approval of extending PwC for one more year, which would be extremely helpful, also since GWPO is in the middle of changing its internal financial system.

In the meantime, a new tender process would be initiated, with emphasis on finding companies which would understand Swedish rules and regulations, as well as having international experience.

*Decision: The Sponsoring Partners approved the extension of Pricewaterhouse Coopers, as the Auditors for GWPO, for one more year. A new tender process for finding GWPO's new Auditors will be initiated asap. At the 2023 Sponsoring Partners meeting, the new Auditors should be approved.*

***Action: The Chief Financial and Administration Officer will separately follow up with Sida, to see that GWP having the same Audit firm for 7 years is in compliance with Sida's rules and regulations.***

## 5. GWP Chair Annual Update

The GWP Chair, Amb. Howard Bamsey, said that he would not only touch on some highlights from the past year, but also share some reflections from his three and a half years as Chair for Global Water Partnership.

- Five new Steering Committee members were appointed by the Sponsoring Partners in 2021. All five have proven to be very dedicated and effective Steering Committee members. Overall, the Steering Committee has been through a very positive development in the way the members are working; being very connected, proactive and creative in discussions, and focused on coming up with proposals and solutions. The members' backgrounds and expertise are very diverse, which makes a great contribution to the discussions and work taking place. The Chair expressed that GWP has a world class Steering Committee now.
- The work on Innovation, which was initially just a word, had taken several significant steps forward through the work led by the Executive Secretary and the Steering Committee. Some very useful emerging ideas have been developed, which require further discussions to lead to more detailed plans.
- The salient topic of water has been accorded lower priority over time by many Governments due to other emerging and pressing issues. Still, as populations grow and climate change impacts become worse, water issues are becoming more and more important. This is not showing up though in the climate resilience agenda set by the climate community.

The water community needs to come together to a much greater extent, to take part in and influence the climate decision process, as a cohesive community. With a more coherent agenda, the water community can bring the influential climate community closer to its work. Some real success in projecting a stronger voice for water, was made at COP26 in Glasgow, through the Water Pavilion. GWP has lately performed impressively well at some very important meetings. At the 2023 UN Water meeting taking place in March, GWP should come out as the go-to organisation for developing a more influential water community. GWP is continuing to develop a stronger collaboration with IWMI, as well as with SIWI.

- The GWP Governance Reform journey, modernising and simplifying the rather messy present structure, is still in its early stages. But it is crucial if GWP is to be successful in improving water governance in the longer term. It will require active support from Sponsoring Partners .
- As of April 1<sup>st</sup>, a new Chair of the GWP Technical Committee took seat. Ms. Jaehyang So has made a terrific start in her new position. Dr. Jerome Delli Priscoli stepped down from the Technical Committee Chair position after having served for two full terms.

### **6. GWP Strategy 2020 - 2025: Update on delivery progress and plans**

The Executive Secretary made a presentation and said that GWP is now about midway through the present strategy period, 2020 - 2025. A mid-term strategy review will be

conducted this year to see what parts of the strategy are still valid, and which parts would need to be adjusted. The focus of the strategy would continue to be on water security.

The strategy is built on six pillars:

- Water Solutions for the SDGs
- Climate Resilience through Water
- Transboundary Water Cooperation
- Mobilize Youth
- Work Towards Gender Equality
- Engage the Private Sector

GWP is progressing well on many fronts within the six pillars. GWP has contributed to good investments having been made in policies leading to countries getting better access to water. These policies are deeply impactful.

As part of the strategy review, discussions need to take place in relation to that IWRM as a concept is not static, it evolves. How would GWP move forward in this regard, staying relevant in a world which keeps changing with new emerging topics and crises arising? Water is no longer among WEF's 10 priority areas, how would GWP bring water back into strategic dialogues?

What needs to be taken into consideration is:

- The world is not on track to meet the 1,5 Celsius climate target, nor the SDG 6 target
- New topics are emerging in the climate and water discussions and donor priorities are shifting
- The water sector is fragmented and competitive. The IWRM concept is evolving, and more organisations are working on this.

For GWP to stay relevant, its action agenda includes:

- Strengthening the influencing of global processes like COP27, UN 2023 Water Conference, Asia Pacific Water Summit, Dushanbe meeting, World Water Forum, Water and Climate Leaders Coalition etc.
- Leading and improving water alignment between stakeholders, both vertically and horizontally, for allowing better harmony between decision makers, investors and implementers. Discussing a coordination vehicle to provide value through facilitated dialogues on data sharing and intelligence. Ensuring a better coordination on the implementing level for large-scale transformative impact.
- Innovative interventions:
  - GCF Readiness Grants in support to countries
  - Scaling water innovations from the bottom up through six Laser beams:
    - ✓ LB#0: Nurturing innovators - targeting youth
    - ✓ LB#1: Water ChangeMakers - new edition to surface innovations
    - ✓ LB#2: Net zero - nexus approach
    - ✓ LB#3: Integrated water security open programme
    - ✓ LB#4: Leveraging the power of data
    - ✓ LB#5: De-risking - GWP is supporting the establishment of a Blended Investment Facility under the AIP (Africa Investment Programme)
  - Increase and mobilize investments in water
  - GWP Toolbox as a virtual hub for water learning



- Bridging the Wash and IWRM sectors
  - Reimagine GWP in 2025 as a global water alignment convener
  - Focus investments to areas and topics where we can create the biggest impact
  - Introduce innovations in a way to foster further collaboration
  - Strengthen regions and countries as delivery mechanisms

Some of the comments/input received during the following discussion:

- ✓ Sida's Head of Unit for Global Cooperation on Environment commended the presentation done and said that it triggered all the "right buttons". Sida had just signed a new four-year agreement with GWP and was looking forward to continuing the collaboration with GWP. "Keep up the good work"!
- ✓ The Hungarian Water Director & Head of Department highlighted that the GWP MOOC's (Massive Open Online Courses) on Transboundary issues have been very useful. A gratitude was sent to the GWP Summer school participants who had helped cleaning up nature from plastic objects. Plastic pollution is an area of concern in Hungary.
- ✓ The Deputy Director at the Global Agenda Department/MFA, Sweden reminded everyone that GWP being mid-way through its strategy period also links to the mid-term of the Agenda 2030. It will be important to bring in learnings gathered so far, to discussions related to a potential change of focus for the second part of the GWP strategy. As mentioned during previous Sponsoring Partners meetings, biodiversity would be an important topic to take forward. Active participation from GWP at the UN 2023 Water Conference would be essential.

The GWP Chair expressed his big thanks to the GWP Executive Secretary and his whole team. The GWPO Secretariat team is a fantastic and outstanding team. Some staff members have shown strong leadership during key events and areas of work, which is commendable.

### **7. Nomination of the new GWP Chair for appointment**

The Nomination Committee Chair referred to the note presenting the nomination process which had taken place, following what is prescribed in the Bylaws of the GWP Nominations Committee and the GWP Statutes, leading to the nomination of Mr. Pablo Bereciartua (citizen of Argentina) to the position as Chair of Global Water Partnership.

The five members of the GWP Nominations Committee, as well as the Extended Search Committee, had unanimously decided to recommend Mr. Pablo Bereciartua for the GWP Chair position.

***Decision: The Sponsoring Partners approved the appointment of Mr. Pablo Bereciartua as the next Chair of Global Water Partnership, for the term of 3 years. Mt. Bereciartua will take seat as of July 1st, 2022.***

The Chair of the Nomination Committee and the Sponsoring Partners expressed their gratitude to Mr. Howard Bamsey, outgoing Chair of the Global Water Partnership, for his dedication and services during his tenure as Chair.

### **8. Any other business, date for SP meeting 2023 and Summary of discussions and decisions:**

No further items for discussion were brought forward.

The GWPO Secretariat will come back to the Sponsoring Partners with a date for the June 2023 meeting well in time.

#### **Summary of discussions and decisions:**

1. The meeting Agenda was approved.
2. According to the procedure of electronic approval of the SP Minutes on a no objection basis after each meeting, the Minutes from the 20th Annual SP Meeting had been approved as of August 25th, 2021.
3. Four decisions had been taken electronically by the Sponsoring Partners since the last SP meeting (see document provided to the Sponsoring Partners as part of the meeting documentation, as well as listed in these Minutes under Agenda item 2.1).
4. Decision: The GWP Annual Activity Report 2021 and the GWP Annual Financial Report 2021 of the Steering Committee to the Sponsoring Partners were received and approved.
5. The GWP Audit Report and Management Letter 2021 were received and considered.
6. Decision: The recommendation of the GWP Auditors to discharge the GWP Steering Committee Members and the Executive Secretary of liability for 2021 was approved.
7. Decision: The Sponsoring Partners approved the extension of Pricewaterhouse Coopers, as the Auditors for GWPO, for one more year. A new tender process for finding GWPO's new Auditors will be initiated asap. At the 2023 Sponsoring Partners meeting, the new Auditors should be approved.
8. Action: The Chief Financial and Administration Officer will separately follow up with Sida, to see that GWP having the same Audit firm for 7 years is in compliance with Sida's rules and regulations.
9. Decision: The Sponsoring Partners approved the appointment of Mr. Pablo Bereciartua as the next Chair of Global Water Partnership, for the term of 3 years. Mt. Bereciartua will take seat as of July 1st, 2022.

The Chair of the Sponsoring Partners took the opportunity to sincerely thank the outgoing Chair, Amb. Howard Bamsey, for his significant contributions to the GWP organisation. Ms. Rawet said

that she had heard from the Sponsoring Partners, Steering Committee members, the GWP Secretariat staff and from her colleagues at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, that Amb. Bamsey came into the organisation with a lot of knowledge, passion, warmth, and interest in people and that he had brought the organisation to a new level, with a lot of progress accomplished. Ms. Rawet said that Amb. Bamsey will be greatly missed and wished him all the best in his future endeavors.

Amb. Bamsey thanked the Chair and all the members of the Sponsoring Partners and said that it had been an enormous privilege to work for GWP.

**Meeting closure:**

The Chair of the Sponsoring Partners thanked everyone for a very constructive and fruitful meeting and thereafter closed the meeting.



*Sigrun Rawet*  
*Chair of the Meeting of the Sponsoring Partners*

