



10th GEF Biennial International Waters Conference

23-26 September 2024, Punta del Este

URUGUAY

**Transformative Actions and Impacts
for the Water and Ocean SDGs:
The GEF IW Response to the Global Challenge**

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Organizers



Pre-Conference Workshops supported by



With the direction and support of the GEF IW agencies



And other partners



Welcome to Punta del Este!

On behalf of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), welcome to Punta del Este for the 10th GEF International Waters Conference (IWC10)!

Join us for an inspiring and transformative experience as we celebrate 30 years of impactful collaboration and innovation in safeguarding our shared freshwater and marine ecosystems.

Hosted by the Government of Uruguay and organized by IW:LEARN, this flagship event brings together over 300 specialists, project managers, and stakeholders from 80 countries, spanning government, non-governmental organizations, UN agencies, development banks, intergovernmental organizations, and the private sector. Participants will represent approximately 100 active GEF IW projects that have collectively contributed to enhancing transboundary cooperation and sustainable development.

The IWC10, themed "Transformative Actions and Impacts for the Water and Ocean SDGs: The GEF IW Response to the Global Challenge," is an interactive hub for learning, sharing, and catalyzing new ideas. Across dynamic plenary sessions, roundtable discussions, workshops, and interactive sessions, attendees will dive into challenges, showcase best practices, and discuss strategic solutions that address the most pressing issues facing our shared water systems.

Building on a remarkable legacy of over 470 projects funded, nearly US\$3 billion in grants invested, and around US\$19 billion in co-financing mobilized across more than 157 countries, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) has profoundly shaped environmental action worldwide. This year's IWC will highlight these transformative results and focus on the future of GEF's IW investments, aiming to expand our global efforts to achieve sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Don't miss the Innovation Marketplace, a space where projects, partners, and sponsors exhibit their approaches and catalytic outcomes. This will be a crucial opportunity to explore how these innovations can be scaled and replicated globally. Furthermore, attendees will visit technical sites relevant to the IW portfolio, providing hands-on experiences that bring theory to life.

Beyond the sessions, the IWC10 also holds networking and social events, including an Arrival Social, followed by the Film Festival, a Cocktail at Casapueblo, a Welcome Reception, and the traditional Gala Dinner. These moments provide the perfect backdrop for informal exchanges and building long-lasting connections.

Whether you are here for the first time or a returning participant, we are thrilled to have you contribute your expertise, ideas, and passion.

Let's collaborate, innovate, and make IWC10 an event to remember as we shape a sustainable and equitable future for our shared waters!

Welcome, and let's make this IWC10 an inspiring and fruitful event!

The GEF IW:LEARN Team

Day 1: A Celebration: 30 years of GEF IW achievements and impact

23 September 2024

0900-0910	10th anniversary Video: Reflections & Expectations - Room: Punta del Este 1
0910-1030	Opening Ceremony: Welcome address GEF International Waters Overview and Evaluation of GEF IW 30+ years of GEF International Waters - Room: Punta del Este 1
1030-1100	Break: Networking / Innovation Marketplace
1100-1230	Stream 1: Kickoff Catalysing Transboundary Cooperation - Panel discussion with policy makers and key actors GEF IW Highlights from the Host Region IW:LEARN: from a pilot initiative to phase V Pitches: Interactive Sessions & Workshops - Room: Punta del Este 1
1230-1400	Lunch at Montecarlo room
1400-1530	<p>Interactive sessions</p> <p>Theme A: Evolution and Innovation towards the next generation of transboundary cooperation and governance: From Assessment to Action Lead: UNDP Co-lead: UNIDO Contributors: MERFI, UNOPS, ACTO, etc. - Room: Rio C</p> <p>Theme B: Achieving policy coherence from source to sea Lead: UNEP Co-lead: WWF-US Contributors: GWP, GWP-SA, SIWI, UNEP/MAP, ACTO, PEMSEA, WWF FW Challenge, FAO, UNDP - Room: Punta del Este 1</p> <p>Theme C: Towards the 30x30 target across the globe Lead: CI Contributors: UNEP/UNOPS, UNEP Nairobi Convention, MEDFUND/CI, BNA/CI, TNC Room: Punta del Este 2</p>
1530-1600	Break: Networking / Innovation Marketplace
1600-1730	<p>Workshops</p> <p>Cross-sectoral cooperation for the sustainable management of the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction with an outlook to the BBNJ Agreement – FAO & Global Ocean Forum - Room: Rio C</p> <p>Accelerating Blue Transformation in SIDS - UNDP - Room: Rio A</p> <p>Beyond Borders and Beyond Impacts: reconsidering cooperation of transboundary groundwaters - UNESCO-IHP, OSS & CEREGAS - Room: Rio B</p> <p>Transboundary Water Governance - Bridging Borders - CAF with Limpopo Commission & TNC - Room: Punta del Este 2</p> <p>Scaling-up public-private water stewardship approaches - UNIDO - Room: Punta del Este 1</p>
1830-2030	Welcome Reception – hosted by Ministry of Environment, Uruguay Escuela Superior de Alta Gastronomía

Day 2: Technical Site Visits: From Source to Sea

24 September 2024

ITINERARY 1 - Montevideo: Technical solutions, nature and culture

Sponsored by IDB

Departure time: 07:15

The Montevideo itinerary, sponsored by the IDB, offers a mix of cultural, technical, and natural experiences, including exploring the historic Ciudad Vieja, visiting a modern wastewater treatment facility, and discovering the biodiversity of the Santa Lucía Wetlands. The day ends with a sunset cocktail at Casapueblo.

ITINERARY 2

Garzón Lagoon and Rocha Lagoon

Departure time: 08:15

The itinerary includes visits to Garzón Lagoon, a protected sanctuary with diverse ecosystems and scenic views, and Rocha Lagoon, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve with over 220 bird species and unique dunes. It is the whale's season! Maybe you can spot one! The day ends with a sunset cocktail at Casapueblo.

ITINERARY 3

Black Lagoon / Santa Teresa Fort / Punta del Diablo Village

Departure time: 07:15

The itinerary highlights Uruguay's natural and historical treasures. It starts with Laguna Negra to learn about sustainable water management, followed by a visit to the 18th-century Santa Teresa Fort to explore its history and architecture. The final stop is Punta del Diablo, a charming fishing village known for its coastal beauty, concluding with a sunset cocktail at Casapueblo.

ITINERARY 4

Punta del Este Porto/Lobos Island / The Hand/ Wastewater Maldonado/ Garzón Lagoon

Sponsored by CAF

Departure time: 07:00

The itinerary around Punta del Este, Uruguay, includes a visit to Isla de Lobos, home to South America's largest sea lion colony and a historic lighthouse; "La Mano," an iconic sculpture symbolizing life at Brava Beach; a cutting-edge wastewater treatment plant enhancing local sanitation and environmental protection; and Garzón Lagoon, a biodiversity hotspot with unique ecosystems and stunning views. The visit ends with a sunset cocktail at Casapueblo.

More info:



Day 3: Bridging Then and Now: Impactful solutions, tools and innovative approaches

25 September 2024

0900-0915 Reflections Video & Session Kickoff
Room: Punta del Este 1

0915-1030 Plenary
Bridging Then and Now

1. Towards more integrated solutions – Talk Show
 - Application of integrated approaches (CWM, Nexus, MSP, S2S etc.)
 - Breathing underwater: why we should all care about marine hypoxia (CHO IP)
 - Circular solutions to plastic pollution (Plastics IP)
 - Blue Green Islands (BGI IP)
2. Policy coherence and challenges – Panel Discussion
 - Integrated approaches and the Water Convention - UNECE
 - Towards the establishment of an International Nitrogen Management System (INMS) – UK CEH
 - Ocean Science solutions for policy integration, in the framework of the Ocean Decade – IOC/UNESCO
 - Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) – GEF Sec

Pitches: Workshops

Room: Punta del Este 1

1030-1100 Break: Networking / Innovation Marketplace

1100-1230 Stream 2: Workshops
Innovative tools and solutions

1. Sustainable fisheries for sustainable livelihoods: approaches and tools (EAF & FPAT) – FAO
Room: Rio A
2. Transboundary Marine Spatial Planning: Towards large marine ecosystems of partnerships - IOC/UNESCO
Room: Rio B
3. Accelerating transboundary water cooperation: How are GEF projects contributing to SDG reporting? – UNECE, UNESCO-IHP & IOC/UNESCO
Room: Rio C
4. Mobilizing global and regional action on nitrogen and nutrient pollution for a healthy planet – UK CEH/UNEP
Room: Punta del Este 1
5. Strengthening the Nexus Approach to address the climate change effects on shared water resources and ecosystems
IDB, OAS, GWP & Interactive Demonstration – IIASA & CRS
Room: Punta del Este 2

1230-1400 Lunch at Montecarlo room

Day 3: Bridging Then and Now: Impactful solutions, tools and innovative approaches

25 September 2024

1400-1530 IW Clinics on Tools and Solutions I

1. How to strengthen Marine Conservation Through the Blue Economy, Tourism and Nature-based Sports – CI - Room: Bariloche
2. How to develop sustainable legal and institutional arrangements for transboundary water cooperation – UNECE & GWP-SA - Room: Rio A
3. How to foster innovative instruments for Water Security in Transboundary Water Systems - CAF & IUCN - Room: Punta del Este 1
4. How to navigate Conjunctive Management of Surface and Groundwater - UNESCO-IHP, UNEP/MAP & UNDP - Room: Punta del Este 2
5. How to leverage NBS to enhance synergies and scalability for Transboundary Water Resilience – Pacific Institute, UNDP, TNC & UNIDO - Room: Rio C
6. How to increase coral reef resilience - University of Queensland & WWF-US - Room: Rio B
7. How to apply environmental DNA monitoring at scale in freshwater and marine systems - IUCN Room: Cancún
8. How to unleash the power of knowledge - IW:LEARN & FAO - Room: Caribe

1530-1600 Break: Networking / Innovation Marketplace

1600-1730

IW Clinics on Tools and Solutions I

9. How participatory, multi-stakeholder processes can contribute to effective Regional Ocean Governance in LMEs - UNEP-Nairobi Convention - Room: Punta del Este 1
10. How to use Participatory-Citizen Science to improve knowledge and engagement: opportunities and limitations for IW projects - Adventure Scientists - Room: Punta del Este 2
11. How do Governance and Management Strategies tackle Transboundary Water Pollution in freshwater and marine ecosystems - ORASECOM with IUCN-South America & UNEP-COBSEA Room: Rio B
12. How to improve communication and outreach using contemporary means and tools - GRID-Arendal & ICPDR - Room: Cancún
13. How can I increase gender equality, mainstreaming, responsiveness and social inclusion in my GEF IW project – GEF, WWAP/UNESCO & WCS - Room: Rio C
14. How to Incorporate High Integrity Blue Forest Solutions into GEF Projects – GRID-A/UNEP Room: Rio A
15. How to develop GEF IW projects following STAP guidance on good project design – GEF STAP Room: Bariloche

1930-2230 Gala event – hosted by IW:LEARN at Narbona Wine Lodge

Day 4 : Transforming the Future: Opportunities and challenges

26 September 2024

0900-0915	Reflections Video & Session Kickoff - Room: Punta del Este 1
0915-1030	<p>Plenary - Room: Punta del Este 1</p> <p>Transforming the future for a Healthy Planet, Healthy People</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Navigating the Future: Transforming IW with Innovation and Technology – Talk show <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transformation and innovation in GEF IW Project design Transformations supported by technology & AI innovations – what’s at stake for GEF IW? Video by Ocean Innovation Challenge – bridging innovation and inclusivity Fostering inclusivity in IW – Talk Show <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Indigenous Peoples Gender <p>Pitches: Interactive Sessions & Workshops</p>
1030-1100	Break: Networking / Innovation Marketplace
1100-1230	<p>Stream 3: Interactive sessions</p> <p>IW Opportunities and challenges</p> <p>Theme D: Sustainable Fisheries & Aquaculture Management: Integrating Ecosystem Approaches for Resilient Resources and Livelihoods – Lead: FAO Co-lead: WB Contributors: AfDB, Forum Fisheries Agency, University of West Indies, GFCM, UNEP - Room: Punta del Este 2</p> <p>Theme E: Fostering inclusivity: Gender and Youth engagement in IW projects Lead: IUCN Co-lead: UNESCO/WWAP Contributors: OAS, FAO (SGP), UNDP - Room: Punta del Este 1</p> <p>Theme F: Looking into the future: Ensure robustness to future change Lead: IADB Co-lead: ADB Contributors: AfDB, CAF, CBF (SIDS), CTPT, TNC, IMO, UNEP/MAP - Room: Rio C</p>
1230-1400	Lunch at Montecarlo room
1400-1530	<p>Workshops</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Striving for Social and Economic Equity in LME & MPA Management - BNA/CI & UNDP-ATSEA Room: Punta del Este 2 Data and Information Management (DIM) in IW projects and programmes - IW:LEARN, UNDP & UNEP Room: Rio B Shared Basin, Shared Destiny: Fostering Collaborative Water Governance for a Sustainable Future - ICPDR & NBI - Room: Rio A Private Sector Engagement in GEF IW projects - WOC & GWP-SA - Room: Punta del Este 1
1530-1600	Break: Networking / Innovation Marketplace
1600-1700	<p>IWC10 Closing session - Room: Punta del Este 1</p> <p>Reporting back on results of Interactive Sessions</p> <p>Closing Ceremony</p> <p>Reflections from conference & way forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closing panel & Transfer of conference cup to IWC11 host Closing remarks: Vice Minister, Carlos Manuel video and IW:LEARN

The GEF International Waters Focal Area and GEF IW:LEARN

The Global Environment Facility (GEF), in partnership with international institutions, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector, unites 186 member governments to address global environmental issues. As an independent financial organization, the GEF provides grants to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for projects related to biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, the ozone layer, and persistent organic pollutants. These projects benefit the global environment, linking local, national, and global environmental challenges and promoting sustainable livelihoods.

IW:LEARN is GEF's International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network. Acting as a service for the GEF International Waters (IW) Focal Area, it supports the portfolio by catalyzing knowledge management and experience sharing, building capacities to improve transboundary water management.

Currently in its fifth project cycle (2022-2026), IW:LEARN receives funding from the GEF and is jointly implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and executed by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (IOC/UNESCO). Through these collaborative efforts, IW:LEARN continues to make significant strides toward enhancing the sustainable management of international waters worldwide.

The design of the IWC10 by IW:LEARN and its partners addresses the outcomes and outputs identified in the results framework.



IWC10 Results Framework

	Design Summary (Outcomes and Outputs)	Performance Targets and/or Indicators	Data Sources and/or Reporting Mechanisms	Assumptions and Risks
1.	Good practices, experiences and successful approaches shared among GEF IW projects.	At least 50 % of GEF IW projects at the IWC10 present at least one of their top innovations and/or replicable experiences.	Presentations from GEF IW portfolio in pre-conference workshops, conference sessions and plenaries; background documentation; and innovation marketplace exhibits	Good practices can be identified from the current GEF IW project portfolio. Risk that not all participating projects produce an exhibit poster, portfolio solution or film, operate a booth or participate in a conference workshop or plenary.
2.	Learning and capacity development promoted for GEF IW projects	At least 70 % of participant evaluations received confirm increased knowledge.	Learning and capacity development documented in participant evaluation and pre-conference workshop reports	Risk that increased knowledge is not incorporated into ongoing projects as strategies and workplans are already fixed
3.	IW Portfolio learning needs and priorities captured for improving GEF IW:LEARN and its other portfolio learning project services.	List of at least 10 emerging learning priorities identified	Rapporteur session summaries	GEF IW projects value a central clearinghouse of information through IW:LEARN to service their learning requirements.
4.	Increase in knowledge sharing	Increase in knowledge exchange and activity of IW community through services offered by IW:LEARN in the months following IWC10	Increased community activity measured by number of website and social media analytics Number of expressions of interest for project-project twinning exchanges	
5.	Active IW projects learn to apply evolving GEF policies, procedures, and results-based management to project implementation.	Increase in active GEF IW projects that apply policies and procedures for results-based management	Applicability documented in participant evaluation and pre-conference workshop reports	IW project managers and participants actively seek opportunities to apply evolving GEF policies, procedures, and good practices in their projects. Assumption that 75 % of current GEF IW projects attend IWC10

Download the app

Download the conference IWC10 app—a one-stop service for conference logistics, the detailed agenda, speaker information, session interactions, and connecting with other participants.

The EventMobi app can be downloaded from the Google Play Store or Apple App Store.

To access the event use the code: IWC10



Google



Apple





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Conference Website: <https://iwlearn.net/events/conferences/iwc10-2024>



IW:LEARN