



1st EDITION OF THE WEST AFRICAN REGIONAL WATER FORUM

(FREAO)

Radisson Blu Hotel, Abidjan, 24–25 September 2026

FORUM AGENDA

Timetable	Sessions/Activities	Organiser
Day 1: Thursday 24 September 2026		
7:00 am–9:00 am	Arrival, collection of badges and registration of participants Set-up complete – 09:00	NOC-RCI (National Organising Committee – Côte d'Ivoire) / CGRE (ECOWAS Water Resources Management Centre)
	Opening ceremony:	Hosted by MINEF (Ministry of Water and Forests of Côte d'Ivoire)
9.00 am–9.50 am	Ministers and other dignitaries take their seats	NOC/CGRE
9.50 am–10.00 am	Arrival of the Prime Minister	STATE PROTOCOL/NOC
10.00 am–10.05 am	Artistic performance [5 mins]	----
10.05 am–10.10 am	Welcome address by the Mayor of Port Bouët [5 mins]	The Mayor or his representative
10.10 am–10.15 am	Address by the Minister for Water and Forests of Côte d'Ivoire (MINEF) [5 mins]	Mr Jacques Assahoré KONAN
10.15 am–10.25 am	Remarks by representatives of the technical and financial partners: - World Bank [5 mins] - African Development Bank [5 mins]	- Ms Fatouma Ibrahima TOURÉ Sector Director for Water in West and Central Africa - Mr Chirwa MTCHERA Director of the Water and Sanitation Department
10.25 am–10.30 am	Address by the Executive Secretary of CILSS [5 mins]	Dr Abdoulaye Mohamadou
10.30 am–10.35 am	Artistic performance [3 mins]	---
10.35 am–10.40 am	Address by the UEMOA Commissioner for the Department of Agriculture, Water Resources and the Environment [5 mins]	Mr Mahamadou GADO
10.40 am–10.45 am	Address by the ECOWAS Commissioner for Infrastructure, Energy and Digitalisation [5 mins]	Mr Amin Amidu SULEMANI
10.45 am–10.50 am	Presentation of Special Awards to two Heads of State (Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire)	CNO-CGRE
10.50 am–11.00 am	Opening address by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire [10 mins]	Mr Robert Beugré Mambé
Group photo		

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11.00 m–11.30 am	Coffee/tea break	
Ministerial Session: Review of the regional IWRM process and progress towards SDG 6 in West Africa		Chair: Mr Abdoulaye SENE Chair of GWP-WA (Global Water Partnership – West Africa) Rapporteur: Mr Frédéric DABIRE Coordinator of the PRA/ME – CILSS (PRA/ME: Regional Support Programme for Water Management; CILSS: Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel)
11.30 am–11.50 am	Presentation of the report on the regional IWRM process and progress towards SDG 6 in West Africa	Dr Madiodio NIASSE – IWRM Study Consultant / ECOWAS Water Resources Management Centre (WRMC-ECOWAS)
11.50 am–1.20 pm	High-Level Panel (1) on lessons to be learnt from the implementation of the regional IWRM process and the achievement of SDG 6 in West Africa	Ministers responsible for water from the following States: ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) UEMOA/WAEMU (West African Economic and Monetary Union) CILSS (Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel)
1.20 pm–2.20 pm	Lunch break	
Session 2: Financing Water Infrastructure		Chair: Mr Mtchera CHIRWA Director of the Water and Sanitation Department, AfDB (African Development Bank) Rapporteur: Mr Amadou Lamine NDIAYE Executive Secretary, GWP-AO (Global Water Partnership – West Africa)
2:20 pm–2:35 pm	Presentation of the report on the topic: ‘Water Infrastructure Financing in West Africa’	ECOWAS PPDU (ECOWAS Project Preparation and Development Unit)
2:35 pm–3:50 pm	Panel (2): What practical solutions are there for mobilising sustainable finance for the development of water infrastructure in West Africa?	▪ Ms Maïmouna SIDIBE Head of the Basic Infrastructure Division, ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID) ▪ Mr Ousmane HANE Secretary-General, OMVG (Organisation for the Development of the River Gambia) ▪ Ms Fatouma Ibrahima TOURÉ Sector Director for Water in West and Central Africa, World Bank ▪ Olivier GOSSO, Executive Secretary, AAEA (African Water and Sanitation Association), ▪ Dr J-F KROU, Coordinator of PASEA-RCI (Support Project for Water and Sanitation Security (PASEA) – Côte d’Ivoire)

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3.50 pm–4.10 pm	Coffee/tea break	
Session 3: West Africa’s participation in the 2026 United Nations Water Conference		Chair: Dr Cheikh Tidiane DIEYE Minister for Water and Sanitation (MHA) of Senegal, Current Chair of AMCOW (African Ministers’ Council on Water) Rapporteur: Mr Nelson GOMONDA Acting Executive Secretary of AMCOW (African Ministers’ Council on Water)
4:10 pm–4:25 pm 4:25 pm–5:25 pm	▪ Presentation on the 2026 United Nations Water Conference: organisation, challenges and opportunities for West Africa ▪ Discussions ▪ Message	▪ Dr DIATTA (Senegal’s Sherpa for the preparation and organisation of the 2026 UN Water Conference) ▪ Participants
5.30 pm	Break for the day	
7.30 pm–9.30 pm	Welcome dinner – Radisson Blu	
Day 2: Friday 25 September 2026		
Session 4: Regional cooperation and water diplomacy		Chair: Mr Kabiné KOMARA Former Prime Minister of Guinea, former High Commissioner of the OMVS Rapporteur: Mr Abdoukarim ASSAO Water Resources Officer at the Environment and Water Resources Directorate, UEMOA (West African Economic and Monetary Union)
9.00 am–9.15 am	Presentation of the report on the theme: ‘Regional Cooperation and Water Diplomacy in West Africa’	Mr Armel MEWOUTH THANG , Regional Programme Officer at IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature)
9.15 am–10.15 am	Panel (3): Hydro-diplomacy: a Vehicle for Regional Cooperation and Transboundary Water Management in West Africa	▪ Mr Mohamed Abdel VETAH High Commissioner, OMVS (Organisation for the Development of the Senegal River) ▪ Mr Bakary FATY Coordinator of the Dakar Water Cluster of the PED (Dakar Water Cluster) ▪ Member of Parliament – Republic of Côte d’Ivoire – National Assembly ▪ Mr Komlan SANGBANA Legal Officer, 1992 Water Convention / Environment and Forestry Division, UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe) ▪ Ms Tanya MERCERON Climate, Peace and Security Adviser, UNOWAS (United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel)
10.15 am–10.30 am	Coffee/tea break	
Session 5: Water-Energy-Food-Environment Nexus		Chair:

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		Mr Balla Moussa SIDIBE Regional Director, IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Rapporteur: Dr Didier Sèyivè ZINSOU Director of the Niger River Basin Observatory, ABN (Niger Basin Authority)
10.30 am–10.45 am	Presentation of the report on the theme: ‘Water-Energy-Food-Environment Nexus’	Mr Gueï Guillaume , ECREEE/ECOWAS (ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency)
10.45 am–11.45 am	Panel (4): Implementing the water-energy-food-environment (WEFE) nexus in West Africa: governance, financing, applied innovation and high-impact solutions for the private sector	▪ Mr Esso AGREGNAN Climate finance expert at ARAA/ECOWAS (ECOWAS Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food) ▪ Ms Jeanne-Astrid NGAKE DE FOKI Head of the Water Security and Sanitation Division (West Africa and Nigeria), AfDB (African Development Bank) ▪ Prof. Kehinde OGUNJOBI Director for West Africa, IWMI (International Water Management Institute) ▪ H.E. Mr Guillermo Martín GORBEA Ambassador of the Kingdom of Spain to Côte d'Ivoire (Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation – AECID)
11.45 am–12.30 pm	Panel (5): Transforming the Sahel through Water, Youth and Entrepreneurial Innovation: Towards an Innovative, Two-Way Strategic Partnership with India - 11.45–11.55: Introductory presentation - 11.55–12.30: Q&A/Discussion	▪ Mr Ibrahim Abakar NASSOUR General Coordinator, JCES (Young Water Champions for the Sahel) ▪ Dr Tazen FOWE Lecturer and Researcher, 2iE (International Institute for Water and Environmental Engineering) ▪ Mr René BAYILI Regional Coordinator of ROAPJE (West African Network of Young Parliamentarians for Water) ▪ Dr Abinesh GANAPATHY, Secretary-General of the Young Hydrologists' Association of India, ▪ Mr Abdoukarim ASSAO, Water Resources Officer at UEMOA (West African Economic and Monetary Union) Commission
12.30 pm–1.30 pm	Lunch break	
	Session 6: Gender, youth and social inclusion	Chair: Dr Boluwaji ONABOLU Chairperson, CRCRE Sub-Regional Consultative Council on Water Resources Rapporteur: Mr René BAYILI Regional Coordinator, ROAPJE (West African Network of Young Parliamentarians for Water)
1.30 pm–1.45 pm	Presentation of the report on the theme: ‘Gender, Youth and Social Inclusion’	GWP-AO (Global Water Partnership – West Africa)

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1.45 pm–3.00 pm	Panel (6): Taking into account the voices, needs and legitimate interests of women, young people and vulnerable communities in water governance in West Africa	Ms Assata CISSE Chair of the National Coordination Committee, CNUBN-CI (National Coordination Committee of Niger River Basin Users – Côte d'Ivoire) Mr Herbert BANGURA Coordinator of the Youth Platform, MRU (Mano River Union) Mr Mohammed ABDUL-NASHIRU Regional Director, WaterAid (international NGO: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) Ms Aissatou BA ECOWAS Centre for Gender Development (CCDG), UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund)
Session 7: Statements and key messages		Chair: The Honourable Bai Mass TAAL Champion of the 1st Edition of FREAO Rapporteur: Mr Alexis KOUASSI Director of the CGRE-ECOWAS (ECOWAS Water Resources Management Centre)
3:00 pm–3:10 pm	Key messages on the Progress of the Regional IWRM process and the Achievement of SDG 6 in West Africa	Chair/Rapporteur of Session 1
3:10 pm–3:20 pm	Key messages on the Water-Energy-Food-Environment Nexus	Chair/Rapporteur of Session 2
3:20 pm–3:30 pm	Key messages on Financing Water Infrastructure in West Africa	Chair/Rapporteur for Session 3
3:30 pm–3:40 pm	Key messages on Gender, Youth and Social Inclusion in West Africa	Chair/Rapporteur for Session 4
3:40 pm–3:50 pm	Key messages on Regional Cooperation and Water Diplomacy in West Africa	Chair/Rapporteur of Session 5
3:50 pm–4:00 pm	Validation of the draft Final Declaration of the 1 st FREAO Edition	CGRE-ECOWAS (ECOWAS Water Resources Management Centre)
4:00 pm–4:30 pm	Coffee/tea break	
4.30 pm–5.00 pm	Session 8: Closing ceremony - Reading of the Final Declaration of the 1st Edition of FREAO - Votes of thanks - Closing remarks by the UEMOA Commissioner - Closing remarks by the CILSS Executive Secretary - Closing remarks by the ECOWAS Commissioner for Infrastructure, Energy and Digitalisation - Closing address by the Minister for Water and Forests of Côte d'Ivoire - Interviews	Master of Ceremonies ECOWAS Water Resources Management Centre (CGRE) Minister (Ghana) ECOWAS Commissioner (Economic Community of West African States) MINEF (Ministry of Water and Forests of Côte d'Ivoire) CILSS (Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel)