

Concept Note

The 31st IHP Regional Steering Committee Meeting for Asia and the Pacific

29 – 31 October 2024
Seoul, Republic of Korea

1. Background

The region of Asia-Pacific has played significant roles in implementing UNESCO's water programmes through International Hydrology Decades (1965-1974) and continued through Intergovernmental Hydrology Programmes (IHP) from 1975 to the present. The programmes contribute to achieving the targets of SDGs and those of other water-related goals in the region.

The remarkable development in Asia and the Pacific to deliver IHP programmes is the establishment of the Regional Steering Committee (RSC-AP) in 1993. Since then, it has been crucial in shaping UNESCO's water programmes to address water problems such as water scarcity, water-related disasters, and water education at a regional level.

Firstly, started in Southeast and East Asia, RSC-AP expanded its geographical coverage and served as a mechanism for scientific exchange and discussion among water scientists over the past three decades. It has stimulated a deeper understanding of water, enhanced technical capabilities, and strengthened human and institutional capacities among water scientists and professionals in the region. This reflects the increasing interconnectedness of Asia and the Pacific, and the shared water-related challenges faced by countries across the region.

Currently, under the [UNESCO IHP-IX Strategic Plan](#) (2022-2029) titled "Science for a Water Secure World in a Changing Environment," IHP-IX explicitly identifies five priority areas to support Member States in achieving the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, with a particular focus on water-related goals in relation to the UN-wide SDG6 Global Accelerator Framework.

- Priority 1: Scientific Research and Innovation;
- Priority 2: Water education in the Fourth Industrial Revolution including Sustainability;
- Priority 3: Bridging the data-knowledge gap;
- Priority 4: Inclusive water management under conditions of global change; and
- Priority 5: Water governance based on science for mitigation, adaptation, and resilience.

IHP-IX also incorporates several cross-cutting themes that are essential for addressing global water challenges.

- Hydrological Systems and Climate Risk
- Water-Food-Energy Nexus
- Water Governance and Policy

These cross-cutting themes are integral to the IHP IX's strategic objectives, which include promoting scientific research, enhancing water education, bridging data knowledge gaps, and fostering inclusive water management practices. The overarching goal is to achieve water security in a changing environment while supporting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other global initiatives like the Paris Agreement and the Sendai

Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

In cooperation with UNESCO HQ and Field Offices, the IHP RSC-AP Secretariat in UNESCO Jakarta, and the participating member states, the RSC-AP has coordinated and implemented a wide range of initiatives including research studies, technical projects, workshops, training courses and annual symposia, bringing together many specialists involved in water-related activities. In addition, RSC-AP will serve as a platform to facilitate the preparation of the 50th Anniversary of IHP and 60 years of water programme at UNESCO at the regional level. With the contribution of all members, RSC-AP aims to take stock of IHP's evolution, to map its impacts and to raise awareness of its role in addressing local, national, regional, and global challenges for a water secure world.

This year, the 31st IHP RSC-AP meeting will be held in Seoul Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea. The meeting is hosted by the Water Resources Policy Bureau, the Ministry of Environment and the UNESCO IHP National Committee of the Republic of Korea, facilitated by the IHP RSC-AP Secretariat at the UNESCO Office in Jakarta and supported by Japan Funds-in-Trust (JFIT).

2. Objectives

The main objectives of the RSC-AP main meeting and side meetings are to report, evaluate, and share knowledge and information on various activities carried out within the framework of IHP in different actors of the UNESCO Water Family in the Asia-Pacific region.

Specifically, the meeting objectives are:

- **Review Previous and Present Achievements:** Assess the activities and accomplishments of IHP RSC-AP members to evaluate progress and impact.
- **Identify Future Challenges:** Discuss upcoming challenges related to water issues in the region and highlight findings and efficient and effective methods to address these challenges within the key focus areas of IHP-IX.
- **Promote scientific collaboration:** Coordinate and enhance scientific and educational collaboration between RSC countries in the region to foster a unified approach to water-related issues.
- **Facilitate Knowledge Sharing:** Promote the exchange of knowledge and experiences among water scientists and professionals through workshops, training courses, and symposia.

This year, the parallel sessions below will be organized to advance the strategic goals of the RSC-AP meeting by focusing on the region's resilience to water-related challenges.

- **Enhancing IHP-IX Cooperation: Synergizing Expertise in the Asia-Pacific Region**
- **IHP RSC-AP Sub-regional Meetings (TBC)**

The **IHP-IX Roundtable Discussion** by the host country will offer opportunities for participants to share their experiences and efforts in tackling water-related disasters in alignment with the UNESCO IHP-IX Strategic Plan. The results of this discussion will be presented as a declaration aimed at achieving a climate and water-resilient Asia, in preparation for the UNESCO IHP's 50th Anniversary in 2025.

The **7th Catalogue of Hydrologic Analysis (CHA) Workshop** will focus on "Water Shortage

and Drought" through presentations and discussions. The workshop will enhance the knowledge sharing on critical water-related issues in Asia and the Pacific.

To explore the potential for further regional collaboration, there will be an open dedicated session titled “**Enhancing IHP-IX Cooperation: Synergizing Expertise in the Asia-Pacific Region**” for addressing specific water issues in line with the IHP-IX outputs. This session will foster synergy and provide a matchmaking opportunity for participants to expedite the implementation of the IHP-IX Phase in the region.

Additionally, a **Poster Session** will provide more detailed information on RSC-AP members’ contributions to resolving major water issues and their areas of expertise.

3. Date and Venue

The meeting and its associated events will be held in a hybrid mode from 29 to 31 October 2024 at [The Westin Josun Seoul](#) in Seoul, Republic of Korea. The meeting schedule will be as follows:

Tuesday, 29 October:

- Morning: IHP-IX Roundtable Discussion “Implementing UNESCO IHP-IX responding to water-related disasters in Asia and the Pacific”
- Afternoon: Parallel sessions
 - a) Enhancing IHP-IX Cooperation: Synergizing Expertise in the Asia-Pacific Region
 - b) The 7th Catalogue of Hydrologic Analysis (CHA) Workshop
 - c) IHP RSC-AP Sub-Regional Meetings (TBC)
 - d) Poster Session “Water issues in Asia and the Pacific” (29 and 30 Oct)

Wednesday, 30 October:

- The 31st session of the IHP Regional Steering Committee for Asia and the Pacific

Thursday, 31 October:

- Field trip to the Water Management Facility in Seoul Metropolitan Area.

English is the working language of the meeting.

4. Registration

All participants are requested to register through [this link](#) by **13 September 2024**, at the latest.

For those who cannot access to registration link, please submit the registration form to RSC-AP Secretariat (natscience.jak@unesco.org).

The meeting will be held in hybrid mode and online participation (Zoom) requires registration in advance through [this link](#).

4-1. Logistics

For all physical participants, the logistics note will be updated in the shared folder. We encourage everyone to check the folder regularly for the most current information.

- Link: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1mU7v-PkjQM3ITz1jj_vz0oV-

[oY2lg_nM?usp=sharing](#)

5. Participant and Agenda

Approximately 60 water professionals, comprising experts, practitioners, policymakers, and researchers from the Asia Pacific countries will attend the event. Representatives from UNESCO Category 2 Centers, Chairs, and Networks will also participate. A preliminary agenda for the event can be found in the following pages of this Concept Note.

Additional materials, including guidelines and a template for the country report, along with logistical information, will be available [here](#).

31st IHP Regional Steering Committee (RSC) Meeting for Asia and The Pacific 29 – 31 October 2024, Seoul, Republic of Korea

TENTATIVE AGENDA

Venue: [The Westin Josun Seoul](#) in Seoul, Republic of Korea

Time (UTC+9)	Agenda item
Day 1: 29 October 2024	
08:00 - 09:00	Registration
09:00 - 12:30	Roundtable Discussion Part 1: " Implementing UNESCO IHP-IX responding to water-related disasters in Asia and the Pacific " (<i>In-person</i>)
12:30 -14.00	Lunch
14:00 - 18:00	Parallel Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhancing IHP-IX Cooperation: Synergizing Expertise in the Asia-Pacific Region (<i>Hybrid</i>) - 7th Catalogue of Hydrologic Analysis (CHA) Workshop (<i>Hybrid</i>) - IHP RSC-AP Sub-regional Meetings (<i>In-person</i>) (TBC)
All-day	Water issue Poster Session (TBC)
18:15 - 20:00	Dinner
Day 2: 30 October 2024	
09:00 - 18:00	The 31st Session of the IHP Regional Steering Committee for Asia and the Pacific (<i>Hybrid</i>)
09:00 - 11:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opening - Vision ceremony, etc.
11:00 - 13:00	Lunch
13:00 - 18:00	RSC-AP Meeting

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Country Reports - Updates from the UNESCO Water Family - Election of IHP RSC-AP Chair, etc. - Closing
All-day	Water issue Poster Session (TBC)
18:00 - 20:00	Farewell Dinner
Day 3: 31 October 2024	
08:00 - 17:30	Field Visit

**IHP-IX Roundtable Discussion:
"Implementing UNESCO IHP-IX responding to water-related disasters in
Asia and the Pacific"**

Seoul, Republic of Korea, 29 October 2024 (In-Person)

The Asia Pacific region suffered the most severe impacts from weather, climate, and water-related disasters globally (WMO 2023). From Central Asia to the Pacific islands, this wide region experiences diverse water-related disasters such as floods, storms, glacier melting, and drought, and adopt different countermeasures to tackle those issues.

By implementing the UNESCO IHP-IX Phase which strategically aims to enhance 'Science for a water secure world in a changing environment', key activities suggested to combat water challenges through five priorities addressing: 1) science and research, 2) water education, 3) data and knowledge, 4) integrated water resources management, and 5) water governance, Member States of the IHP Regional Steering Committee for Asia and the Pacific (RSC-AP) and members of UNESCO Water Family can share their own experiences and efforts to respond those water issues effectively.

Also, in order to prepare the UNESCO IHP's 50th Anniversary in 2025, participants can consolidate concerted visions towards a climate and water-resilient Asia and the Pacific into a declaration.

Procedure	6 roundtables (rotating each table every 20 minutes) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (Priority area 1) Scientific Research and Innovation 2. (Priority area 2) Water education in the 4th Industrial Revolution including sustainability 3. (Priority area 3) Bridging the data-knowledge gap 4. (Priority area 4) Integrated water management under conditions of global change 5. (Priority area 5) Water governance based on science for mitigation, adaptation, and resilience 6. (IHP 50th Anniversary) RSC-AP's vision towards IHP-50
Moderators	IHP-ROK Committee Members

Coordinators	IHP-IX Partner Organizations / Water Experts
Participants	RSC-AP Member States and UNESCO Water Family organizations (6 groups will be formed according to the RSC-AP sub-regions)
Expected outcomes	RSC-AP Vision Declaration* <i>*The declaration will be announced during the RSC-AP 31 Opening Ceremony on the following day</i>

Date: 29 October 2024
 Time: 09.00 – 12.30 (Korean Standard Time)
 Venue: Lilac & Tulip, 2F, Westin Josun Hotel, Seoul

This roundtable is open to all RSC-AP Member States and UNESCO Water Family for physical participation only. The proceedings and guidelines for the roundtable will be informed to all participants in advance. Most importantly, a draft declaration will be circulated to participants beforehand to collect feedback and reviews to finalize the document during this session.

The 7th Catalogue of Hydrologic Analysis (CHA) Workshop Seoul, Republic of Korea, 29 October 2024 (Hybrid)

Due to their vastness and diversity, countries in Asia and the Pacific region face a wide range of water challenges. Climate, topography, the development history of water basins, and human behaviour vary significantly, resulting in a wide range of hydrological analysis methods to address the challenges. Despite these diversities, there is a lack of readily accessible platforms for water experts and practitioners to share their experiences.

To address this missing link, the IHP RSC-AP developed a series of Catalogue of Hydrologic Analysis (CHA), aiming at facilitating knowledge sharing on critical water-related issues in Asia and the Pacific, including disaster preparedness, water environment conservation, and water resources management. Subsequently, this publication is accredited as one of the outcomes of the international cooperation of the member countries of the RSC-AP under the auspices of the UNESCO IHP Phase IX.

Following the successful publication of the third volume of CHA under the theme “Groundwater,” the IHP RSC-AP Secretariat, together with the CHA editorial team, deliberated potential themes for the fourth volume of the Catalogue and concluded to propose “Water Shortage and Drought” as the theme for the upcoming volume.

The 7th RSC CHA workshop will feature presentations addressing the proposed theme ‘**Water Shortage and Drought**’ in Asia and the Pacific. Furthermore, the workshop will finalize the theme and timeline of the fourth volume of CHA, ensuring alignment with the objectives of IHP-IX. The detailed publication process and plan will be elaborated on the occasion of the CHA workshop, which will take place on:

Date:	29 October 2024
Time:	16.00 – 18.00 (Korea Standard Time)
Venue:	(In-person) Lilac & Tulip, 2F, Westin Josun Hotel, Seoul (Online) Zoom Registration Link

Anyone interested in presenting at the 7th RSC CHA Workshop must register through [this link](#) by **21 September 2024**.

**Enhancing IHP-IX Cooperation:
Synergizing Expertise in the Asia-Pacific Region**
Seoul, Republic of Korea, 29 October 2024, (Hybrid)

By sharing outcomes of implemented IHP-IX outputs addressing topics below, all participants can acquire water information and knowledge from the Asia-Pacific Region and seek opportunities to create synergy by collaborating each other. This session will also provide a match-making chance for all participants to accelerate IHP-IX implementation in the region.

Presentation slot is open to all RSC-AP Member States and UNESCO Water Family members by first-come, first-served. Each theme will consist of 3 presenters (10 mins per presentation); therefore, the maximum number will be 9 presentations. Anyone interested in presenting should contact the IHP-ROK Secretariat (secretariat@ihpkorea.or.kr) by sending an email by **13 September 2024**.

Provisional Themes 1) Ecohydrology
 2) Data and Monitoring
 3) Water and Food Security

Date: 29 October 2024
Time: 14.00 – 16.00 (Korea Standard Time)
Venue: (In-person) Lilac & Tulip, 2F, Westin Josun Hotel, Seoul
 (Online) Zoom [Registration Link](#)

Poster Session

Water issues in Asia and the Pacific

Following up on the discussion at the 30th RSC-AP Meeting about time-effective management sharing the information and knowledge among participants, the 31st RSC-AP Meeting will set a Poster Session to share a more detailed information on RSC-AP members' contribution to resolving major water problems in the country/expertise. This poster session will be a platform for all participants to present and highlight their own pressing water issues.

Posters will be exhibited in the corridor for two days, thus all participants from Member States and UNESCO Water Family can explore water issues of Asia and the Pacific region and share ideas during the break or recession.

Date:	29-30 October 2024
Time:	09.00 – 18.00 (Korea Standard Time)
Venue:	2F Corridor, Westin Josun Hotel, Seoul
Size/format:	To be announced (Ai, PDF, PPT, Excel)
Submission Due:	30 September 2024

Participants who want to share major water issues of their respective country or organization can submit the poster to the RSC-AP Secretariat (secretariat@ihpkorea.or.kr) by **30 September 2024**.