



"Water is life. No blue, no green."

Sylvia Earle, Oceanographer

**Empowering children and young people to protect
the world's water and shape a more sustainable future.**

Water Week 2026-2030 Manifesto



IN SUPPORT OF THE
WATER
ACTION DECADE
2018-2028

“Just as mankind had the power to push the world to the brink so, too, do we have the power to bring it back into balance,”

King Charles III



WHY WATER WEEK EXISTS

"I began as an underwater photographer, witnessing first-hand the degradation of our oceans. What I saw changed the course of my life.

In searching for how real change happens, I came to believe that education - not fear - is our most powerful tool. When children understand the issues, see what's possible, and believe they can make a difference, they don't switch off - they step forward. Water Week exists to turn that agency into real, measurable change in the systems that shape our world."

Katy Newnham
Founder, Water Week



UN@80 Exhibition, London (UNRIC)
Katy Newnham, Founder, Water Week
Aneeshwar Kunchala, Water Week Youth Ambassador
Moksha Roy, Water Week Youth Ambassador

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Water Week is a science-led global movement that inspires children and young people to become lifelong water stewards through education, participation, collaboration and shared learning.

Water Week provides a science-led engagement and impact infrastructure that helps countries educate, engage and empower civic society to become part of the solution to the world's water challenges. By connecting and amplifying existing initiatives, it transforms local participation into national evidence and global learning.

Built on the principle of **From Source to Sea**, Water Week connects freshwater and marine stewardship within one integrated framework - helping people understand that rivers, lakes, groundwater, wetlands, coastlines and oceans form one interconnected water system, and that collective action across the entire water cycle creates greater environmental, social and economic impact.

Water Week transforms local action into national evidence, national evidence into global learning, and global learning into stronger collaboration, better decisions and measurable progress towards a more water-secure future.

Celebrated annually around **UN World Water Day**, Water Week brings together children and young people, communities, educators, businesses, governments and civil society through **STEAM education**, storytelling, citizen science, behaviour change and coordinated action.

Every participating country delivers Water Week through a shared framework that can be adapted to its own culture, priorities and water challenges - reflecting Water Week's principle of Global Collaboration, Local Ownership and Shared Learning.

Each participating country is encouraged to celebrate achievement, publish evidence and identify future priorities through its own nationally coordinated process before contributing evidence, innovation and shared learning to the annual **Global Water Futures Assembly**, held alongside **SIWI World Water Week** in Stockholm.

THE WATER WEEK **ANNUAL CYCLE**



Water Week is more than an annual campaign. It is a continuous cycle of participation, evidence, learning and improvement that strengthens water stewardship year after year.

March – The World Acts

Countries inspire education, participation and coordinated action through Water Week.

April–July – Nations Reflect

Each participating country celebrates achievement, measures impact, publishes its National Youth Water Impact Report, identifies future priorities and selects representatives through its National Water Futures Summit.

September – The World Learns Together

Representatives from every participating country come together at the Global Water Futures Assembly, held alongside SIWI World Water Week, to share evidence, innovation and learning, strengthen collaboration and launch the next Water Week cycle.

Together these three stages transform participation into evidence, evidence into learning and learning into greater collective impact.

THE FUTURE WE CHOOSE – WHAT FUTURE DO WE WANT FOR OUR CHILDREN?

Clean water is not a privilege - it is the foundation of life, health, food security and thriving societies. Yet for billions of people, that future is increasingly at risk.

Currently;

- **1/4 of the world's population** faces severe water scarcity.
- **80% of wastewater** flows back into nature without being treated or reused – causing irreversible harm to ecosystems.
- **Every year 19 to 23 million tonnes of plastic waste** leaks into aquatic ecosystems, polluting lakes, rivers and seas.

Water security is one of the defining challenges of the **21st century**.

Source: UNEP 2023



**Water
Week**



THE GLOBAL WATER MANDATE

Education as the Foundation of Water Security



Water-related challenges are accelerating - from scarcity and pollution to infrastructure strain and climate volatility. The risks are no longer distant; they are structural and compounding.

In response, the United Nations General Assembly declared 2018–2028 the International Decade for Action: “Water for Sustainable Development.” The Decade calls for the sustainable and integrated management of water resources to secure social, economic and environmental resilience, and to accelerate progress toward globally agreed water targets.

Meeting these ambitions requires more than policy commitments. It requires societal capability.

Embedding water stewardship across society depends on education. Young people are not simply future leaders - they are present citizens, consumers and influencers of culture. Through quality education, they can understand water science, recognise systemic challenges, and contribute meaningfully to governance and community action.

Education is therefore not an adjunct to water security - it is foundational to it. It enables the adoption of new technologies, supports behaviour change, strengthens public compliance, and builds the civic literacy needed to sustain long-term resource management.

Water security depends not only on investment in infrastructure, but also on investment in people. It requires societies that understand, value and actively protect water.



WHY PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT **MATTERS**

Water security depends on informed, engaged and empowered societies.

When people understand water, **they value it.**

When they value it, **they change behaviour.**

When behaviour changes, **collective action grows.**

When participation is measured, countries **generate evidence.**

Evidence leads to better decisions, stronger investment and **more effective water management.**

Shared international learning helps countries innovate faster, avoid repeating mistakes and build **long-term resilience.**

Together these changes help build a society that is better prepared to protect water resources, support essential infrastructure and respond to future water challenges.

WATER WEEK THEORY OF CHANGE

From learning to lasting impact—
every step strengthens the next
to build a more water-secure future
for everyone.

When people are
educated and empowered,
they protect water.
When we protect water,
we build stronger, more
resilient communities
and economies.



EDUCATED MINDS



ENGAGED COMMUNITIES



EVIDENCE-BASED ACTION



RESILIENT FUTURES

THE CASE FOR **WATER SECURITY**

Water Week isn't simply about protecting water. It's about reducing the future cost of water insecurity.

Water Week is designed as an invest-to-save civic infrastructure model that helps countries reduce long-term water risk while strengthening environmental, social and economic resilience.

By improving public understanding, strengthening water stewardship, generating environmental and behavioural intelligence, and supporting more informed decision-making, it helps reduce avoidable demand, encourage pollution prevention, strengthen civic participation and improve the effectiveness of investment in water infrastructure.

By creating shared value for governments, businesses, communities and the natural environment, Water Week demonstrates that investing in people is an essential complement to investing in water infrastructure - helping build more resilient, water-secure societies.

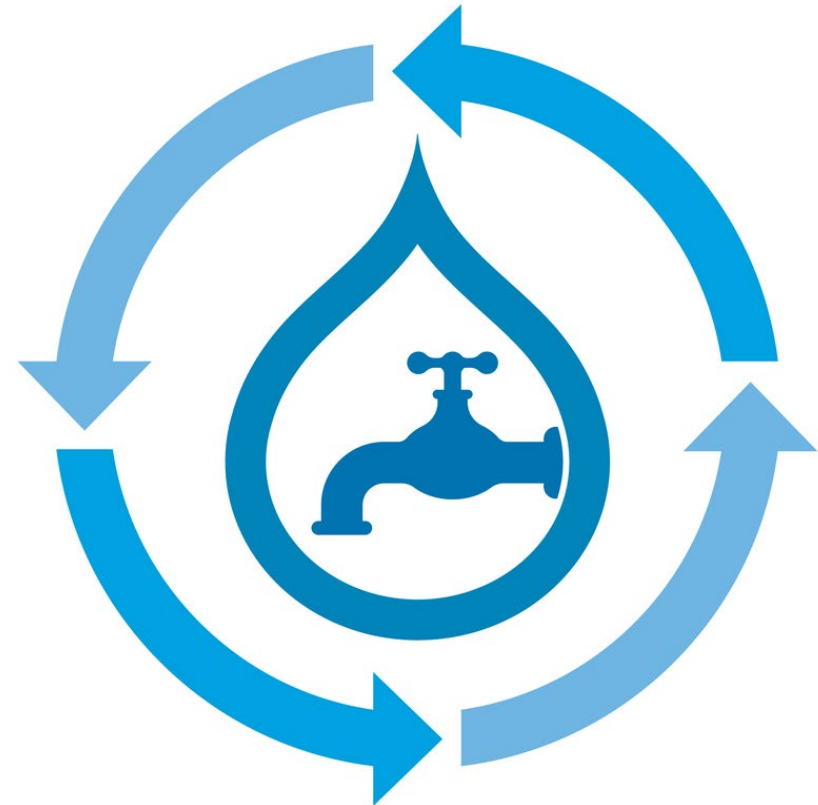
A CIRCULAR ECONOMY FRAMEWORK – HOW EFFICIENCY IS UNLOCKED

Designed as an Invest-to-Save Model

Water Week helps improve national water system efficiency by:

- Reducing avoidable demand
- Reducing pollution entering systems
- Increasing public compliance
- Supporting infrastructure adoption
- Improving household behaviours

**Education → Engagement → Efficiency →
Long-Term System Savings**



A PLATFORM FOR COLLECTIVE WATER EDUCATION



Water Week operates as a shared platform that unites education, government, industry, civil society and media around a common evidence-based framework.

By aligning resources, intelligence and delivery systems, it reduces fragmentation and unlocks the power of coordinated action.

Through shared measurement, reporting and engagement tools, Water Week strengthens the quality, consistency and reach of water education - generating social, economic and environmental benefits for the communities it serves.

WATER WEEK: A SCIENCE-LED CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE



Water Week responds to global challenges through a **science-led civic initiative** for children and young people - exploring the science of sustainability and using storytelling to translate complex systems into understanding, connect knowledge with values, and inspire sustained environmental action.

Storytelling → Education → Action → Evidence → Policy & Investment → Environmental Improvement → New Stories





GLOBAL FRAMEWORK, LOCAL ACTIVATION

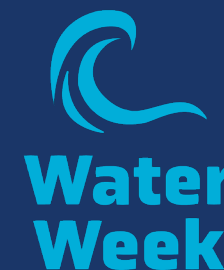


Water Week national editions engage **country-specific stakeholders** and respond to **regional environmental, social and economic priorities** – while placing **children and young people** at the centre of learning, participation and action.

Through **education pathways, measurable action programmes** and parliamentary and community platforms, Water Week enables children and young people to understand **how water systems work** - and how their decisions and actions contribute to **real-world outcomes**.



FOSTERING THE POWER OF COLLECTIVE IMPACT



By adopting the principals of [UN SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals](#), Water Week aims to unlock the power of collective impact.

To foster collaboration and partnership [Wastebuster](#), an accredited partner NGO of the **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** and acting as Secretariat for Water Week, coordinated a consultation and parliamentary reception, in collaboration with [Products of Change](#) and with the support of the [Wombles Community Charity](#).

This process brought together over 180 cross-sector stakeholders working in water conservation and pollution to help define the roadmap strategy for [Water Week](#).

Representatives from the United Nations, industry, governments, NGOs, and academia are now joining forces to support the development of Water Week into a global campaign by 2030, in direct support of the [UN Water Action Decade](#).

17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



THE WATER FUTURES ALLIANCE

The Water Futures Alliance is the cross-sector governance and mobilisation body guiding national delivery and global coordination

Core stakeholder groups within the Water Futures Alliance:

- **Education & Youth**
Schools, youth networks, ambassadors
- **Government & Public Authorities**
National, regional and local government departments and regulatory bodies
- **Water & Marine Industry**
Utilities, engineering, marine innovation
- **Civil Society & NGOs**
Environmental, conservation and community organisations
- **Indigenous & Traditional Knowledge Holders**
Indigenous communities, customary governance bodies, land and water custodians
- **Sport & Recreation Bodies**
Water sports federations, marine recreation, outdoor education networks
- **Business & Retail**
Consumer brands and retail sectors
- **Media & Creative Industries**
Broadcast, film, publishing, gaming, music and cultural influencers
- **International Institutions**
UN agencies and multilateral institutions

WATER WEEK DELIVERY ARCHITECTURE

Global Science. Local Action. Shared Impact.

Water Week operates as a science-led, globally aligned and locally activated civic infrastructure.

3-key elements of its delivery pathway:

- 1) Global Science & Systems Framework**
- 2) Localised National Delivery Model**
- 3) Shared Data & Systems Influence**



1) GLOBAL SCIENCE & SYSTEMS FRAMEWORK

Aligned to:

- UN Water Action Decade & SDGs
- STEAM disciplines (Natural, Social, Formal & Applied Sciences)
- Circular economy principles
- Behavioural science
- Infrastructure efficiency and demand reduction

Provides:

- Curriculum architecture
- Measurement standards
- Data modelling framework
- Policy alignment
- Global coordination



THE INTELLECTUAL BACKBONE: **SCIENCE DRIVES EVERYTHING**

Water Week is grounded in the full structure of **STEAM**.

- **Natural Sciences**
Understanding hydrology, ecosystems, chemistry, climate and ocean systems.
- **Social Science**
Understanding behaviour change, social norms, policy and economic systems.
- **Formal Sciences**
Using maths, statistics and data science to model impact.
- **Applied Sciences**
Engineering solutions for circular economy and infrastructure efficiency.
- **Creative & Cultural Arts**
Using storytelling, media, design and creative expression to shift culture and mobilise civic action.
- **Interdisciplinary Sciences**
Systems thinking to connect education, markets and governance.

Water Week translates science into civic action.

A SCIENCE-LED BEHAVIOUR CHANGE **INFRASTRUCTURE MODEL**

**Water Week marks a strategic shift.
It is not simply a campaign - it is infrastructure.**

Water Week is:

- A science-led civic behaviour change and impact intelligence system
- A circular economy education framework
- An invest-to-save infrastructure model
- A bridge between youth action and policy systems

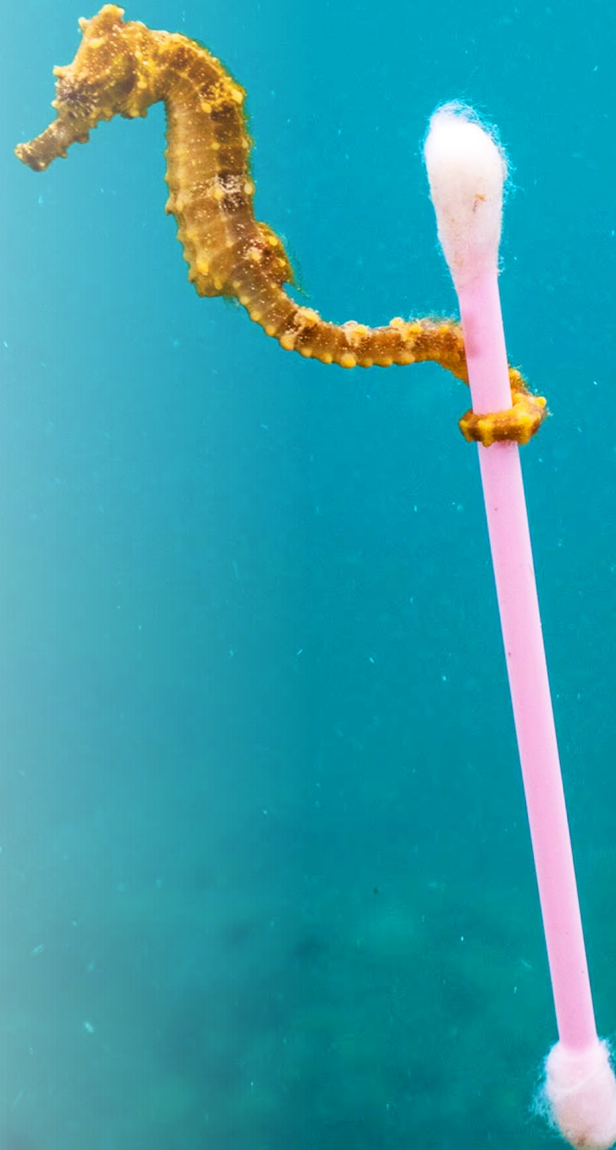
**Education → Engagement → Evidence
→ **Efficiency****

TRANSLATING SCIENCE THROUGH STORYTELLING

Water Week does not present science as **abstract information**.

It translates **complex systems** - hydrology, climate, economics and infrastructure - into **stories**, creative media and **real-world action** that young people and communities can understand and relate to.

Through **storytelling**, visual media, youth voice and cultural expression, science becomes **accessible, personal and actionable**.



SCIENCE + STORY = CULTURAL TIPPING POINT

Data alone rarely changes behaviour. Culture does.

People change when science is translated into stories they understand and share.

Water Week combines:

- scientific evidence
- youth reporting and storytelling
- film, music and media collaborations
- children's entertainment and popular culture
- national storytelling through the Water Week roadshow and streaming programme

Working with the media and entertainment industries, Water Week aims to:

- Normalise responsible behaviours
- Shift social norms
- Create a cultural tipping point
- Make sustainability mainstream



ENTERTAINMENT FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

The Cultural Engine of Water Week

Science informs people. **Stories** move people.

Water Week uses media, culture and storytelling to turn water stewardship into a **national movement**.

- **Youth storytelling**
Young reporters documenting the water story
- **Film & documentary**
Making invisible water systems visible
- **Music & cultural media**
Turning sustainability into a shared movement
- **Gaming & interactive media**
Participation through play and discovery
- **Animation & children's storytelling**
Helping the next generation understand water systems

Science + Story = Cultural Tipping Point

This is education powered by culture.

2) LOCALISED NATIONAL WATER WEEK

(Delivered by in-country stakeholders)

Tailored to:

- National water challenges
- Local infrastructure realities
- Cultural context and traditional knowledge systems
- Policy priorities
- Industry landscape

Mobilises:

- Schools and families
- Local authorities
- Utilities and waste operators
- NGOs and education groups
- Media and entertainment partners
- Youth ambassadors



HOW WATER WEEK LOCALISATION WORKS – A National **Governance-to-Impact** Framework

A National Governance-to-Impact Framework

Each territory delivers Water Week through a scalable 7-step pathway:

1. National Delivery Partner & Advisory Board

Establish local leadership, governance and strategic oversight

2. Cross-Sector Water Futures Alliance

Convene government, industry, NGOs, education and youth stakeholders

3. National Priorities & Call to Action

Identify shared water challenges, engagement priorities and impact goals

4. Curriculum & Content Localisation

Adapt STEAM-aligned resources to national context and education standards

5. National Water Stories Campaign

Amplify local voices, innovation, communities, environmental action and opportunities to engage

6. National Engagement & Citizen Science

Mobilise schools and communities through measurable participation activities

7. Water Futures Summit & Impact Review

Young people present findings, evidence and recommendations to decision-makers

Result:

A locally owned, cross-sector mobilisation platform for water awareness, participation and measurable environmental impact

3) SHARED DATA & SYSTEMS INFLUENCE

Water Week transforms local observations and actions into structured environmental, social and behavioural intelligence that can help inform policy, improve infrastructure planning, strengthen resilience and reduce long-term water-related risk.

Local Action Generates

- Citizen science mapping of litter and pollutants
- Measured water-saving behaviour
- Pollution and infrastructure pressure indicators
- Youth insight and community observations

This produces structured, verifiable data at school, local and regional level.

- National and regional dashboards
- Behavioural trend analysis
- Cross-territory comparisons
- Evidence-led policy dialogue
- Infrastructure efficiency insight
- Smarter targeting of interventions

The Feedback Loop

Insights inform:

- Improved education design
- More precise campaign targeting
- Better behavioural interventions
- Strategic infrastructure planning

Result

Education → Behaviour → Evidence → Policy → Infrastructure Efficiency

TEACHING YOUNG PEOPLE HOW SYSTEMS CHANGE

Every year millions of children learn about water in school - yet few programmes translate that knowledge into **measurable action**.

Water Week **bridges that gap**.

Water Week teaches students:

- How policy is formed
- How global resolutions are agreed
- How civic data influences decision-making
- How markets respond to behaviour
- How collective action shifts systems

Children and young people do not just learn about water. They learn how societies change.

This is civic literacy in practice.



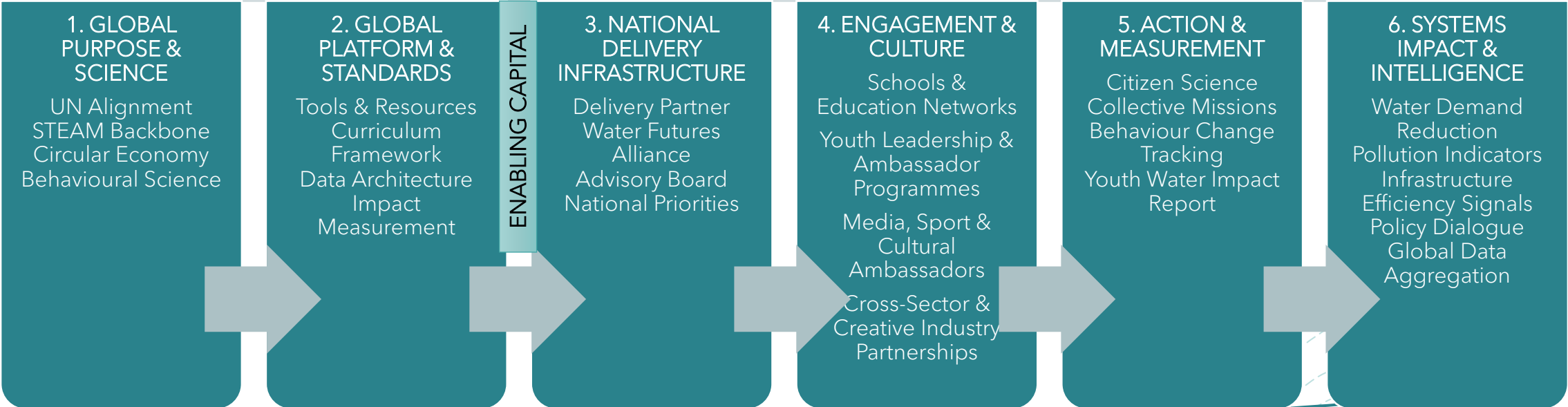
Picture: UK Youth Parliament (UKYP)

WATER WEEK CAMPAIGN ARCHITECTURE – From Global Purpose to Systems Change



← GLOBAL INTELLIGENCE LOOP →

National datasets • cross-country comparisons • trends • policy insight • infrastructure signals



Impact data is aggregated nationally and globally to continuously improve targeting, curriculum, and policy dialogue.

THE GLOBAL WATER FUTURES ASSEMBLY

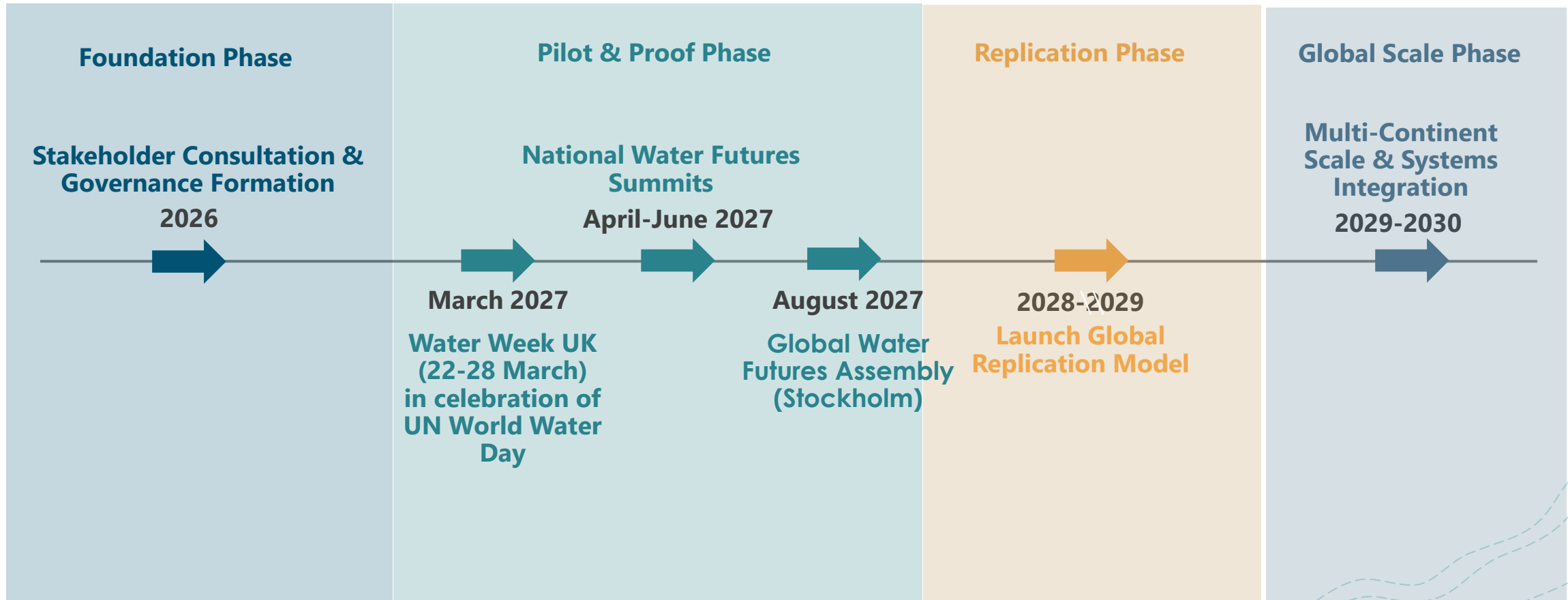
Held annually alongside SIWI World Water Week, the Global Water Futures Assembly brings together representatives from every participating country to share evidence, celebrate achievement and shape the future of water stewardship.

Every participating country arrives having:

- celebrated national achievements
- published its Youth Water Impact Report
- selected national innovation winners
- appointed youth representatives
- identified priorities for the year ahead

The Assembly provides a shared forum where countries exchange learning, strengthen collaboration, celebrate innovation and collectively launch the next Water Week cycle

DELIVERY TIMELINE - GLOBAL BY 2030





ENABLING CAPITAL: THE WATER FUTURES FUND

A blended finance mechanism supporting national replication and youth-led impact

Water Week is designed as civic infrastructure - and infrastructure requires structured, long-term capital.

The Water Futures Fund will be coordinated through the Planet Futures Foundation governance framework, working alongside public, philanthropic, corporate and existing funding partners to help align investment, support collaborative delivery and maximise collective impact.

The Fund supports two core objectives:

A. Establishing & Scaling National Infrastructure

1. National Start-Up Support

- Seed funding for new country delivery partners
- Deployment of the platform, governance and data infrastructure.
- Curriculum localisation and systems integration

2. Youth & Community Impact Grants

- Micro-grants for youth-led water projects
- Funding for community partnerships and local delivery
- Scaling proven initiatives with measurable impact

B. Structured & Diversified Capital Streams

3. Corporate Membership & Cultural Capital

- Structured membership for organisations aligned to water system improvement
- Sport, media and creative industry collaborations
- Licensed "Foundation Supporter" designation for aligned products and services

4. Earned Revenue & Blended Investment

- Philanthropic, public and corporate co-investment
- Water Rewards marketplace generating mission-aligned earned revenue
- Transparent impact reporting aligned to national data standards

Result

Storytelling → Education → Behaviour → Evidence → Infrastructure
Efficiency → Risk Reduction → Economic Value → Reinvestment

The Fund positions Water Week as an invest-to-save civic infrastructure model - supporting long-term system resilience rather than short-term sponsorship activity

HOW WATER WEEK CREATES PUBLIC VALUE

Where Investment Goes

Investment in Water Week supports the development of a national civic infrastructure for water stewardship.

Capital enables:

Platform & Data Infrastructure

- Development of the Water Week platform, dashboards and measurement systems that translate local participation into national insight.

Education & Curriculum Resources

- STEAM-aligned learning materials and storytelling content for schools and youth networks.

Citizen Science & Impact Measurement

- Systems enabling schools and communities to record water stewardship actions and pollution observations

National Engagement & Cultural Campaigns

- Mobilising schools, youth reporters, media partners and communities to generate participation and behaviour change

Policy & Stakeholder Engagement

- Convening the Water Futures Summit and publishing the Youth Water Impact Report.

What Impact It Creates

The programme translates participation into national insight and environmental benefit.

Expected outcomes include:

- measurable youth participation in water stewardship
- structured datasets on water behaviour and pollution
- improved public understanding of water systems
- reductions in avoidable water demand and pollution
- evidence supporting policy and infrastructure planning
- long-term improvements in water system efficiency

Education → Engagement → Evidence → Policy → Infrastructure Efficiency

- Local action generates data
- Data produces national insight
- Insight improves system performance

Water Week is designed as an “invest-to-save” civic infrastructure model - where education, behaviour change and data contribute to long-term water system efficiency.

Investment → Participation → Data → Insight → System Improvement

ALIGNING CIVIC DATA WITH GLOBAL FRAMEWORKS

Water Week supports:

- UN Water Action Decade
- SDG 6 (Clean Water & Sanitation)
- SDG 4 (Quality Education)
- SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption)
- SDG 17 (Partnerships)

Through proposed collaboration with:

- UN-Water
- UNEP
- UNESCO
- UNICEF
- IMO
- UN Act Now

Water Week will generate youth-led civic data that can complement global understanding of:

Education → Attitudes → Behaviour → Infrastructure Demand

Water Week represents a pioneering integration of education, entertainment and environmental systems intelligence to translate youth action into measurable systems change.

THE FUTURE WE ARE BUILDING

- Millions of children and young people becoming lifelong water stewards.
- Every participating country delivering its own nationally owned Water Week.
- National Water Futures Summits translating participation into evidence.
- Countries sharing learning through the Global Water Futures Assembly.
- Evidence strengthening policy, investment and collaboration.
- A scalable model enabling countries to learn from one another and continuously improve water stewardship.

Water Week transforms local action into national evidence, national evidence into global learning, and global learning into greater collective impact.

Water Week will move:

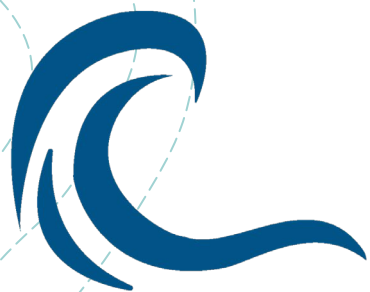
From awareness → to influence

From influence → to infrastructure

From infrastructure → to systems change

JOIN US TO HELP ENSURE SAFE AND CLEAN WATER FOR ALL





Water Week

For Further Details

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**LIFE ABOVE WATER
DEPENDS ON LIFE
BELOW IT.**

SAVE OUR OCEAN

