

# 2025 General Assembly Network Meeting of Partners

22 May 2025

## Draft Report

### 2025 General Assembly (Network Meeting of Partners)

**Date & time:** 22 May 2025, at 14.30-15.30 CEST

**Where:** Online (Zoom call)

**Co-hosted** by the GWPO Secretariat in Stockholm, Sweden, and the GWP Africa hub, hosted by GWP Southern Africa in Pretoria, South Africa (in a demonstration of true North–South collaboration)

**Participants:** Registered GWP Partners and GWP staff (as observers)

**Interpretation:** provided in Spanish

### Agenda

1. **Welcome Remarks:** Mr Alex Simalabwi, CEO of the Global Water Partnership Organisation (GWPO) & Executive Secretary of GWP
2. **Global Transformation Agenda on Water Investments:** Hon. Pablo Bereciartua, GWP Chair
3. **Presentation and request for amendments to the GWP and GWPO Statutes**
4. **Presentation of highlights: Draft GWP Annual Report 2024, Financial Statements 2024, and new GWP Strategy 2026-2030**
5. **Resolutions of the General Assembly**
6. **Closing**

## 1. Welcome from the Executive Secretary

**Mr Alex Simalabwi**, CEO of the Global Water Partnership Organisation (GWPO) and Executive Secretary of GWP, welcomed participants and explained that the General Assembly — officially called the Network Meeting — is an integral part of GWP's governance. It provides a space to present the work carried out in the previous year and to seek guidance from Partners on the strategic direction of the organisation.

Mr Simalabwi emphasised that this particular General Assembly was extremely important because GWP is in the midst of the Global Transformation Agenda on Water Investments — in which the GWP Steering Committee, in partnership and in consultation with GWP's founding partners (Sponsoring Partners), has made a number of key decisions over the past three months, responding to long-standing demands and requests from GWP Partners on how to better position and strengthen the organisation.

He also noted that these developments are taking place alongside major global shifts — including accelerating climate emergencies, more frequent floods and droughts, and a decline in international development financing as countries reprioritise their funding due to limited resources. He described the General Assembly as a critical decision moment for GWP and emphasised that the resolutions to be presented are essential to enabling the organisation to transition and better respond to the needs of its Partners.

## 2. Statement from the Chair

Following the welcome from the Executive Secretary, **Hon. Pablo Bereciartua**, Minister of Infrastructure for the City of Buenos Aires, Argentina, and Chair of GWP, formally opened the General Assembly and delivered a statement on the **Global Transformation Agenda on Water Investments**.

He outlined four key resolutions adopted by the GWP Steering Committee in February 2025: the relocation of the GWPO global headquarters to the Global South; the decentralisation of GWPO into four Technical Support Hubs embedded within GWP Regional Water Partnerships; the launch of a new GWP Strategy for 2026–2030, and Global Investment Programme; and the establishment of a Transition Office in South Africa, including a Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Strategic Partnerships Liaison Offices.

Hon. Bereciartua announced that GWPO will open its intergovernmental Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for signature by new Governments and States on 2 June — for the first time in over 20 years — offering a historic opportunity to join the Organisation. This forms the basis of the **United Call for Global Water Investment Leadership**.

To enable the relocation of the Secretariat, he noted that amendments to the GWP and GWPO Statutes are required, as the current Statutes specify that the Secretariat must be based in Stockholm, Sweden. The proposed changes aim to provide greater flexibility as an intergovernmental organisation to respond to global priorities.

*Full statement provided in Annex 1.*

### 3. Presentation and request for amendments to the GWP and GWPO Statutes

Following the Chair's statement, the Executive Secretary introduced the proposed amendments to the GWP and GWPO Statutes. He highlighted that this marked a historic moment for GWP, as the amendments would, for the first time, allow geographical flexibility in the location of the GWPO Secretariat — including the possibility of more than one host country.

The proposed changes were presented in detail by Ms Sara Oppenheimer, GWP's Programme Specialist (*see Annex 2: Slides*).

All present Partners were invited to vote during the General Assembly.

**The proposed amendments to the GWP and GWPO Statutes were unanimously approved by all present Partners.**

### 4. Presentation of highlights: Draft GWP Annual Report 2024, Financial Statements 2024, and new GWP Strategy 2026-2030

Following the approval of the statutory amendments, the General Assembly continued with a presentation of highlights from the past year and a preview of GWP's strategic direction for the years ahead.

The Executive Secretary presented key elements of the **Draft GWP Annual Report 2024**. Ms Michele Schwarz, GWP's Chief Financial Officer, then provided an overview of the **Financial Statements 2024**. Ms Sara Oppenheimer, GWP's Programme Specialist, concluded the segment with a presentation of the proposed **GWP Strategy for 2026-2030**.

*See Annex 2: Slides.*

Following the presentations, the Executive Secretary invited the Vice Chair of GWP, **Ms Nchedi Sophia Maphokga-Moripe**, who was present at the Africa Hub in Pretoria, to offer comments on the Draft Annual Report 2024. She expressed appreciation for the continued commitment of GWP Partners and acknowledged the efforts of the Secretariat and the leadership of the Chair.

Due to time constraints, the planned interactive breakout sessions could not take place. However, brief reflections on the draft Strategy were shared by the breakout group facilitators:

- **Ms Ildiko Ipolyi**, Regional Coordinator of GWP Central and Eastern Europe, emphasised that this is an important moment for GWP and welcomed the ambition of the new agenda, expressing readiness to move forward with implementation.
- **Mr Raymond Valiant**, Regional Coordinator of GWP Southeast Asia, noted that the Strategy is essential in helping the organisation respond to global change, and stressed the importance of close collaboration with Partners in the years ahead.

- **Ms Sarra Touzi**, Senior Climate and Water Specialist, welcomed the level of ambition in the Strategy and underscored the need for collective commitment across the Network to ensure successful implementation.
- **Ms Fabiola Tabora**, Regional Coordinator of GWP Central America, highlighted that the Strategy builds on past achievements and is aligned with the Global Transformation Agenda, offering both challenges and opportunities for joint action with Partners.

Additional reflections were offered by **Prof. Michael Scoulllos**, Chair of GWP Mediterranean, who stressed the importance of resilience and collaboration in navigating the next phase for GWP, and expressed confidence that, despite the difficulties ahead, the Network is well positioned to emerge stronger.

## 5. Resolutions

Concluding the General Assembly, the Executive Secretary presented the resolutions of the meeting.

- **Resolution 1:** Partners adopted the proposed amendments to the GWP and GWPO Statutes.
- **Resolution 2:** Partners adopted the resolutions of the GWP Steering Committee on the Global Transformation Agenda on Water Investments, specifically:
  - The relocation of the GWPO Global Headquarters from Sweden to a host country in the Global South and the establishment of a GWPO Transition HQ office in South Africa.
  - The decentralisation of the GWPO Secretariat into four Technical Support Hubs embedded within GWP Regions.
  - The establishment of a Global Outlook Council on Water Investments.
- **Resolution 3:** Partners adopted the decision of GWPO to invite new countries to join the Sponsoring Partners Group.
- **Resolution 4:** Partners noted the 2024 Annual Report and financial statements.
- **Resolution 5:** Partners adopted the strategic directions for the GWP Strategy 2026-2030, recognising these as guiding principles for the next strategic period.

## 6. Closing

The Executive Secretary closed the General Assembly by thanking all Partners for their engagement and participation. He invited participants to stay online for the **High-Level Leaders Water Dialogue in the Context of the G20 – Towards the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments**, taking place immediately after the General Assembly.

## Annex 1: Statement from the Chair

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**Hon. Pablo Bereciartua, Minister of Infrastructure for the City of Buenos Aires and GWP's global Chair**

*Dear Partners,*

*It is a true privilege — and a pleasure — to welcome you to the 2025 General Assembly of GWP Partners. This is a moment not only to reflect on our shared achievements — but to look ahead, and to mark the beginning of a bold new chapter in the life of our Network.*

*Climate change is accelerating — and nowhere are its impacts felt more directly than through water. Floods, droughts, and water shortages are becoming more frequent and severe, placing mounting pressure on vulnerable communities and national institutions.*

*In light of the increasing global climate emergency and escalating challenges on water security — the GWP Global Board (Steering Committee), in February 2025, adopted a set of resolutions to launch the Global Transformation Agenda for climate-resilient water investments.*

*This agenda sets an ambitious course for the years ahead — at a time when water remains critically underfunded despite growing risks. It responds to calls by global leaders to scale up investments in water security, in the face of increased climate-induced water risks. At least USD 15 billion will be leveraged by 2030, and USD 500 million mobilised for GWP Partners, in collaboration with G20 member countries, Multilateral Development Banks, Climate Funds, and other partners.*

***The Transformation Agenda is grounded in four key Resolutions:***

***First***, to relocate the global headquarters. Our Host Agreement with Sweden will end in May 2026. In line with shifting geopolitical realities and to respond more effectively to the needs of the most impacted by water-related challenges, the GWPO Headquarters will relocate from Stockholm to the Global South.

***Second***, decentralisation of GWPO into four Technical Support Hubs embedded within GWP Regional Water Partnerships:

- *In South Africa for Africa*
- *In Indonesia for Asia*
- *In Greece for Europe and MENA*
- *And in Brazil, Uruguay or Panama for Latin America and the Caribbean*

***Third***, a new GWP Strategy for 2026–2030 and launch a Global Investment Programme — to help countries unlock finance and accelerate high-impact water investments.

***And fourth***, to establish a GWPO Transition Office in South Africa to manage the transition — including:

- *Establishing a Global Outlook Council on Water Investments, co-chaired by H.E. Jakaya Kikwete, to lead high-level engagement with global leaders and partners*

- *And setting up GWPO Strategic Partnerships Liaison Offices in Stockholm, Brussels, Washington DC/New York, Geneva, and Beijing*

*This transformation is not just about governance or structure. It's about becoming more responsive, more regionally grounded, and more effective in unlocking the water investments that countries urgently need.*

### ***United Call for Global Water Investment Leadership***

*As part of this broader transformation, I also want to highlight that GWPO is now opening its intergovernmental Memorandum of Understanding — for the first time in over 20 years - a historic opportunity for new States and Governments to join the Intergovernmental Organisation. This forms the basis of the United Call for Global Water Investment Leadership, welcomed by several Sponsoring Partners earlier this month. The MoU opens for signature on 2 June in Stockholm, Pretoria, and Geneva:*

- *In terms of the diplomatic process, countries that are interested should contact the GWP Secretariat for a copy of the MoU and the package on the benefits.*
- *Once the governments have reviewed the MoU and are interested to join they should contact the GWO Secretariat.*
- *The Secretariat will request the current Sponsoring Partners to approve.*
- *Once approved, the MoU signing ceremony will be arranged between the country and GWPO.*

### ***Proposed amendments to the Statutes***

*In order to carry out the relocation of the GWPO Secretariat from Stockholm to a host country in the Global South, the GWP and GWPO Statutes need to be amended. The current Statutes specify that the Secretariat must be based in Stockholm, Sweden. We now seek greater flexibility as an intergovernmental organisation — to respond more effectively to the most pressing priorities for achieving water security.*

*You are now invited to vote on these proposed changes. **I invite the Executive Secretary Alex Simalabwi to introduce the proposed amendments to the Statutes.***

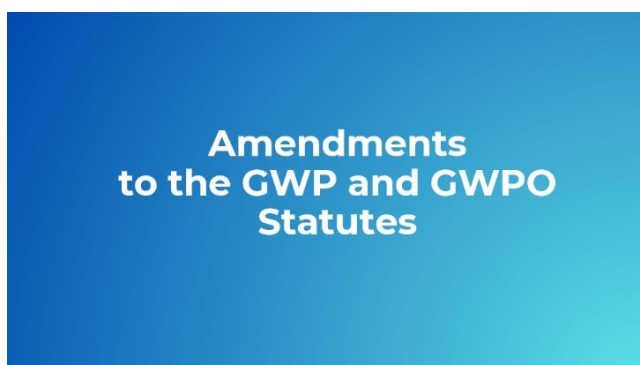
***Thank you** for your trust, your continued commitment, and the work you do every day to build a water-secure world.*

## Annex 2: Slides presented at the General Assembly

### Welcome from the Executive Secretary



### Statement from the Chair



### Adoption Process of the Amendments to the GWP and GWPO Statutes

- Article 17: a resolution outlining the **proposed amendments** to the GWP and GWPO Statutes are **presented to registered GWP Partners and submitted for a formal vote** during the Network Meeting (General Assembly).
- Adoption of the amendments requires **approval by at least two-thirds of the Network Meeting**.
- The same **resolution is presented to the Meeting of the Sponsoring Partners**, where a unanimous decision is sought for **final adoption**.
- Article IV of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Establishment of the Global Water Partnership Organisation of 2002  
Amendments to the GWP and GWPO Statutes **enter into force one year after** the Sponsoring Partners' decision.

### Article 1(3): Legal Status, Article 12: Location, Article 13 Privileges and immunities

- The proposed amendments aim to facilitate the decentralisation of GWPO.
- To enable **CWPO to establish its presence across multiple countries**, the Statutes must provide the legal basis for concluding Headquarters Agreements with more than one State.
- They also seek to ensure that CWPO staff are granted the necessary privileges and immunities in all countries where the Secretariat is located.

Current articles in the 2012 GWP & GWPO Statutes	Recommended Amendments <sup>1</sup> for the 2025 GWP & GWPO Statutes
<p><b>Article 1: LEGAL STATUS</b></p> <p><b>Article 1(3) currently reads as follows</b> The Organisation shall possess full legal personality under international law and enjoy such capacities as may be necessary to exercise its functions in the fulfilment of the objective set out in Article 2. Its status under the national law of the Host State of the Secretariat will be provided in a Headquarters Agreement between that State and the Organisation.</p>	<p><b>Article 1: LEGAL STATUS</b></p> <p><b>Article 1(3) shall be amended as follows:</b> <i>The Organisation shall possess full legal personality under international law and enjoy such capacities as may be necessary to exercise its functions in the fulfilment of the objective set out in Article 2. Its status under the national law of a Host <b>State/s</b> of the Secretariat will be provided in a Headquarters Agreement between that State and the Organisation.</i></p>

Current articles in the 2012 GWP & GWPO Statutes	Recommended Amendments <sup>1</sup> for the 2025 GWP & GWPO Statutes
<p><b>Article 12: LOCATION</b></p> <p><b>Article 12 currently reads as follows</b> The Secretariat of the Organisation shall be located in Stockholm.</p>	<p><b>Article 12: LOCATION</b></p> <p><b>Article 12 shall be amended as follows:</b> <i>The Secretariat of the Organisation shall be virtual, or located within a host organisation, or in <b>the State/s</b> where the Organisation <b>has entered into a headquarters agreement with the government of that State.</b></i></p>

Current articles in the 2012 GWP & GWPO Statutes	Recommended Amendments <sup>1</sup> for the 2025 GWP & GWPO Statutes
<p><b>Article 13 PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES</b></p> <p><b>Article 13 currently reads as follows</b> The Organisation and its staff shall enjoy such privileges and immunities in the Host State as shall be stipulated in the Headquarters Agreement referred to in Article 1, paragraph 3.</p>	<p><b>Article 13 PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES</b></p> <p><b>Article 13 shall be amended as follows:</b> <i>The Organisation and its staff shall enjoy such privileges and immunities in the <b>Host State/s</b> as shall be stipulated in the Headquarters Agreement referred to in Article 1, paragraph 3, and <b>Article 12 above</b></i></p>



### Article 8 (5): The Nomination Committee

- Amendments to Article 8(5) are intended to improve the **efficiency of the GWP Nominations Committee's mandate**.
- The Committee is responsible for nominating the GWP Chair, Steering Committee members, and both External and Internal Auditors, with final appointments made by the Meeting of the Sponsoring Partners.

Current articles in the 2012 GWP & GWPO Statutes	Recommended Amendments <sup>1</sup> for the 2025 GWP & GWPO Statutes
<b>Article 8: THE NOMINATION COMMITTEE</b>  <b>Article 8 (5) currently reads as follows</b> The nominations shall be presented to the Partners at least three months before the Annual Meeting of the Sponsoring Partners. In order to receive widest possible support from the Partners, the Nomination Committee shall be prepared to modify its nominations in the light of comments by Partners. Nominations and relevant comments from Partners shall be presented to the Sponsoring Partners one month before the Annual Meeting when the appointments shall be made.	<b>Article 8: THE NOMINATION COMMITTEE</b>  <b>Article 8 (5) shall be amended as follows:</b> The nominations shall be presented to the Partners at <b>least six weeks</b> before the Annual Meeting of the Sponsoring Partners. In order to receive widest possible support from the Partners, the Nomination Committee shall be prepared to modify its nominations in the light of comments by Partners. Nominations and relevant comments from Partners shall be presented to the Sponsoring Partners one month before the Annual Meeting when the appointments shall be made.

### Voting on the proposed amendments to GWP & GWPO Statutes

A window will appear on your screen to vote on the proposed amendments to GWP & GWPO Statutes.

- **Click "YES" to approve the amendments**  
 FR: Cliquez sur « **YES** » pour approuver les modifications  
 ES: Haga clic en « **YES** » para aprobar las enmiendas  
 RU: Нажмите « **YES** », чтобы одобрить поправки.  
 CN: 点击"YES"同意修改
- **Click "NO" to reject the amendments**  
 FR: Cliquez sur « **NO** » pour rejeter les modifications  
 ES: Haga clic en « **NO** » para rechazar las enmiendas  
 RU: Нажмите « **NO** », чтобы отклонить поправки  
 CN: 点击"NO"拒绝修改
- **Click "I am participating as an Observer" if you are not representing a Partner organisation but you are staff of GWPO, RWP, CWP**

# Annual Report 2024

2025 General Assembly  
Network Meeting of Partners | 22 May 2025



## Key headline results

- **Approx. 140 million EUR** of water-related investments can be linked to GWP's work
- **58 water governance improvements** influenced by GWP activities
- **16 policies, plans and strategies** at national, regional and river basin levels
- **11 transboundary river basin agreements** and management frameworks

2025 General Assembly  
Network Meeting of Partners | 22 May 2025



## Advancing water solutions for the SDGs

- **Water & Climate Finance Plans:** Developed response strategies and financing plans addressing water and climate bottlenecks in Nepal, Palestine, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda.
- **Valuing Water in Tanzania:** Conducted economic analysis showing water contributes at least 3.3% of GDP; emphasized need to integrate shadow value in national accounts.
- **Global Leadership:** Co-chaired the UN-Water Innovation Task Force to drive progress on SDG 6 through innovation. Example: Web-based decision-support integrating local and earth observation data for early warning in the Volta Basin
- **Data-driven prioritization:** Co-developed 2024 SDG6.5.1 mid-term report with UN-Water and UNEP – revealed global water sustainability may not be achieved before 2049 without increased financial investment.



2025 General Assembly  
Network Meeting of Partners | 22 May 2025



## Building climate resilience for water security

- **Boosting climate-resilient water investments:** The Green Climate Fund approved USD6.2M to develop Climate-Resilient Water Investment Programmes across 15 African countries in partnership with the Africa Union, and an additional USD800k for similar efforts in Montenegro.
- **Funding Leverage:** Leveraging GWP's investment planning, pipeline development, and capacity building support, Somalia secured USD94.9M for climate-resilient agriculture from the GCF, benefiting 2.1M people.
- **Blended Finance Progress:** Under AU-AIP, a SADC regional water finance facility was designed, seeking USD55M in concessional GCF funding, co-financed by public-private partners.
- **Global Drought Policy Influence:** UNCCD COP16 resolution mandated GWP, WMO, and IDMP to enhance drought monitoring by integrating aridity, shaping global drought policy and management systems.



## Facilitating transboundary water cooperation

- **Joint River Basin Cooperation:** Malawi, Tanzania, and Mozambique signed an MoU for joint management and development of the Ruvuma/Rovuma River Basin, spanning three SADC countries.
- **Drin Basin Strategic Action Programme:** Launched a USD 7.1M GEF project to enhance transboundary cooperation and integrated natural resource management.
- **Water Law Capacity Building:** Delivered Pan-Africa Water Governance and International Water Law Training in partnership with UNECE, GEF IW:LEARN, and others.



## Mainstreaming gender equality

- **Sri Lanka's Gender-Responsive Climate Investment Planning:** Climate Smart Green Growth Strategy and Investment Plan includes gender-focused indicators to track equality outcomes.
- **Chile's Gender-Responsive Regional and Sectoral Climate Planning:** Gender embedded in Regional Climate Change Action Plans, and in Sectoral Mitigation and Adaptation Plans for mining and transport.
- **Gender Balance in Somalia's Climate Finance Governance:** Balanced representation of women and men in Inter-Ministerial Technical Committee for Climate Change, and Sectoral Working Groups for Climate Finance Programming. Gender aspects integrated into job descriptions within the GCF National Designated Authority.



## Mobilising youth for water management

- **Youth Empowered in Climate Lawmaking:** In Honduras, young professionals actively contributed to the development of the Climate Change Law.
- **Youth Engagement through Climate Internships:** In China, youth engaged in an internship and exchange programme with the Belt and Road Working Committee.
- **Youth Leadership in Transboundary Water Governance:** Youth leaders co-designed strategies for inclusive governance and innovation across the Danube River Basin at the Danube Youth Leadership Stakeholders Roundtable.



## Working with the private sector

- **Leveraging Private Sector Leadership for Water Data Innovation:** Global companies joined international organizations and stewardship networks in a public-private roundtable to drive improvements in water management data.
- **Mobilizing Private Sector Investment Through Climate Finance Strategy:** The Central African Republic validated its Private Sector Engagement Strategy and Action Plan, creating a pathway to attract private sector investments by leveraging concessional international climate finance.
- **Advancing Corporate Water Stewardship Through Innovation:** a groundbreaking groundwater conservation project was designed, launched in 2025, that contributes to Microsoft Corporation's global water replenishment targets.



# Financial Statements 2024



2025 General Assembly  
Network Meeting of Partners | 22 May 2025



**In 2024, the GWP budget was €16.9 million.**

**This includes the funds signed by GWPO and the GWP Regional Water Partnerships.**

Source image: [https://www.shutterstock.com/stock-photo-source-of-Financing.html?from\\_view=detail](https://www.shutterstock.com/stock-photo-source-of-Financing.html?from_view=detail)

2025 General Assembly  
Network Meeting of Partners | 22 May 2025



**The total amount of funds signed by GWPO was € 7.7 million.**

This includes:

- Unrestricted Funding: € 0.5 million
- Restricted Funding: € 7.2 million

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2025 General Assembly  
Network Meeting of Partners | 22 May 2025



**The total amount of restricted funds signed by Regional Water Partnerships was € 9.2 million.**

**In-Kind Contribution for the activities of the GWP Network was € 1.7 million (unaudited amount)**



Source image: [https://www.shutterstock.com/stock-photo-source-of-Financing.html?from\\_view=detail](https://www.shutterstock.com/stock-photo-source-of-Financing.html?from_view=detail)

### GWP 2024 Financial Audits are under finalization

- ✓ 13 Unqualified Audit reports from external regional auditors.
- ✓ An Unqualified Global Consolidated Audit Report is expected soon.



Source image: <https://www.shutterstock.com/track/photos/stock-photo/financing-idea/544154444>

## GWP Strategy 2026-2030

### Our vision

- A water secure world

### Our mission

- To support countries in the financing, governance and management of water resources for sustainable, climate resilient and equitable development.

### Strategic Goal 1: Finance

**Increase the volume, quality and efficiency of financing to achieve climate resilient water security for all.**

GWP will **convene public, private, and development actors** to co-design continental and national **investment programmes** and **develop pipelines** that bridge the gap between water management needs and investor expectations and financing models.

We will **facilitate cross-sector collaboration** and **promote blended finance solutions** to unlock a broader range of funding sources while increasing the efficiency and impact of water-related investments.



### Strategic Goal 2: Governance

**Improve national water governance and transboundary cooperation in the water and water-related sectors to support the achievement of water security for all.**

GWP will support countries in strengthening **water governance systems** for inclusive, equitable, and climate-resilient water management, creating the conditions necessary for **effective and sustained investment**.



Source map: IWRM Data Portal, UNEP, UNEP-DHI, GWP  
<https://iwrmdataportal.unepdhi.org/interactive-map>

### Strategic Goal 3: Capacity & Knowledge

**Build and increase the capacity of institutions, professionals, service providers and systems, and strengthen the generation, sharing and application of knowledge to accelerate water security for all.**



GWP will focus on **building institutional and human capacity** to plan, finance, and manage climate-resilient water investments.

We will strengthen **knowledge ecosystems** that enable learning across countries and regions, informed by evidence, practice, and innovation.

### INTERVENTION AREAS

To achieve our Strategic Goals, we will leverage our Network focusing on 5 main intervention areas:



# Resolutions of the General Assembly

### Resolution 1

Partners adopted the proposed amendments to the GWP and GWPO Statutes.

### Resolution 2

Partners adopted the resolutions of the GWP Steering Committee on the Global Transformation Agenda on Water Investments, specifically:

- a) The relocation of the GWPO Global Headquarters from Sweden to a host country in the Global South and the establishment of a GWPO Transition HQ office in South Africa.
- b) The decentralisation of the GWPO Secretariat into four Technical Support Hubs embedded within GWP Regions.
- c) The establishment of a Global Outlook Council on Water Investments.

### Resolution 3

Partners adopted the decision of GWPO to invite new countries to join the Sponsoring Partners Group.

### Resolution 4

Partners noted the 2024 Annual Report and financial statements.

### Resolution 5

Partners adopted the strategic directions for the GWP Strategy 2026-2030, recognising these as guiding principles for the next strategic period.



# Closing