



**Costa Rica's Proposal for Co-Chairing
Interactive Dialogue 5 – “Water in Multilateral Processes”
United Nations Water Conference 2026 – United Arab Emirates –**

1. Context and Rationale:

Water is a cross-cutting element that underpins the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the realization of human rights, peace, and climate resilience. Despite its fundamental role, water governance remains fragmented across multiple forums and institutions, often treated as a sub-issue within broader agendas. Unlike oceans or food security, there is no intergovernmental mechanism mandated by UN Member States to coordinate water governance in a comprehensive and integrated manner.

In this context Costa Rica propose to co-chair Interactive Dialogue 5: “Water in Multilateral Processes”, to advance a global reflection on how water can be more effectively positioned and coordinated within multilateral frameworks, ensuring coherence, accountability, and sustained political attention at the highest level.

Costa Rica has long been recognized for its global leadership in environmental sustainability, human rights, and multilateral cooperation. The country has consistently promoted an integrated and human rights-based approach to water management, recognizing access to water and sanitation as fundamental pillars for sustainable development, social equity, and peace.

Through its ambitious policies on renewable energy, watershed protection, and ecosystem-based management, Costa Rica offers valuable experience in linking local governance with global environmental commitments.

As a co-chair, Costa Rica brings a balanced perspective from the Global South, bridging the gap between local realities and global decision-making to advance inclusive and transformative water governance.

2. Objectives:

The co-chairs aim to:

- Strengthen multilateral water governance by fostering synergies among intergovernmental, regional, and thematic processes, including the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework and Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).
- Promote inclusive, transparent, and evidence-based governance mechanisms that bridge local and global water agendas.
- Contribute to shaping the post-2030 framework for water, safeguarding and building upon the achievements under SDG 6.
- Encourage cross-sectoral integration of water considerations in climate, biodiversity, health, and peace agendas.

3. Thematic Focus:

The dialogue will address the following dimensions:



- Identifying mechanisms to enhance coordination across multilateral water-related processes, including linkages with the conventions of Rio.
- Strengthening the capacity of local authorities and communities worldwide to manage water sustainably and inclusively.
- Promoting institutionalized use of data and innovative tools to improve water governance, monitoring, and accountability.
- Highlighting the need to mobilize sustainable financing for water infrastructure, technology, data systems, and regional cooperation mechanisms.
- Integrating freshwater, sanitation, and ocean governance perspectives under a unified framework.

4. Process and Engagement:

Costa Rica will actively support an inclusive preparatory process leading to the UN Water Conference 2026, engaging Member States, civil society, women, youth, Indigenous peoples, academia, and private sector actors.

Will:

- Participate in and contribute to key preparatory milestones, including the Dakar Preparatory Meeting (January 2026), the 7th UN Environment Assembly, the Dushanbe High-Level International Conference on Water 2026, the High-Level Political Forum 2026, and Stockholm World Water Week 2026.
- Facilitate consultations to collect diverse perspectives and ensure the dialogue's recommendations are grounded in broad, inclusive participation.
- Promote alignment with the work of the UN Special Envoy on Water and other Special Rapporteurs, to mainstream water considerations in global policy discussions.

5. Expected Outcomes:

- Identification of potential pathways for a more coherent intergovernmental process on water under the UN framework.
- Recommendations for enhancing multilateral cooperation on freshwater and sanitation governance, including a proposal to maintain regular UN Water Conferences.
- Strengthened participation of civil society, youth, women and stakeholders in shaping and implementing the outcomes of the UN Water Conference.
- Consolidation of global political momentum to ensure that water remains at the top of the international agenda beyond 2030.