WEXGlobal 2027
WATER AND ENERGY EXCHANGE

WEX GLOBAL 2027 WORKING DOCUMENT

The Water-Positive Economy: Delivering Abundance at Scale

19-21 April 2027 in Madrid, Spain



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WEX GLOBAL 2027 – WORKING PROGRAMME DOCUMENT

The Water-Positive Economy: Delivering Abundance at Scale

Madrid | 19-21 April 2027

SUMMIT OVERVIEW

WEX Global 2027 marks the next phase in our global water-positive agenda. Having moved from vision to action in delivering "A World of Water Abundance" in 2026, the focus now shifts to scaling solutions, investment and impact.

Water abundance does not mean unlimited supply. It means creating water systems capable of consistently meeting environmental, social and economic needs through greater efficiency, regeneration, circularity and effective governance.

Achieving this at scale requires us to move beyond reducing harm or improving individual assets towards water-positive outcomes that strengthen the health and resilience of the water systems on which society and the economy depend.

But these outcomes cannot be delivered through isolated projects or corporate commitments alone. Infrastructure, finance, technology, governance and markets must work together to create systemic change.

This is the foundation of the emerging Water-Positive Economy: an economic model that aligns investment, innovation and stewardship to generate net-positive outcomes for water systems while delivering water security, climate resilience, sustainable economic development and social prosperity.

As pressures from climate change, population growth, urbanisation and industrial development intensify, the challenge is to turn this model into practical, measurable action at scale.

WEX Global 2027 will therefore explore how we move **from ambition to implementation, from implementation to verified impact, and from isolated initiatives to system-wide transformation.**

The agenda is structured around five interconnected streams:

1. Stewardship & System Design — How do we define, design and deliver desired outcomes at basin scale?

2. Digital Intelligence — How do we measure, optimise and verify performance?

3. Resilient & Circular Infrastructure — How do we create water, recover resources and generate value at scale?

4. Finance, Markets, Policy & Sustainable Development — How do we mobilise investment and scale implementation?

5. Collaboration & Innovation— How do we align stakeholders, share accountability and deliver lasting impact?

Key Speakers Include:

- Jamie Barba, General Manager Xylem Vue & CEO Idrica, Spain
- Olga Ferrer, Head of Innovative Technologies, Acciona, Spain
- Jeannette Henderson, Head of Innovation, Ofwat, UK
- Guillem Gilabert-Oriol, Research & Development Technical Leader Water,
- Arnt Baer, Managing Director, GELSENWASSER Stadtwerkedienstleistungs-GmbH, Germany
- Andrea AliscionI, General Manager, ACEA ATO2
- Manuel Sapiano, Chief Officer Water Resources, Rizorsi Agrikoli Agency, Malta
- Lukas Egle, Circular Economy and Industrial Leadership, European Commission Joint Research Centre, Spain
- Karl Cilia, CEO, Water Services Company, Malta
- Bander Albazai, General Manager of Development Affairs, Saudi Fund for Development, KSA
- Dries Huygens, Scientific / Technical Officer, European Commission Joint Research Centre, Spain
- Ramon Gonzalez Tevar, Director of Operations, Aljarafesa, Spain
- Alejandro Sturniolo, Co- Founder & Executive Director, Aqua Positive, Spain
- Dobromir Simidchiev, CEO, Hydrolia, Bulgaria
- Juanma Revuelta, CEO, Finnova, Belgium
- Will Sarni, Practice Lead Water & Nature, Earth Finance Inc, USA
- Miguel Angel Sanz, President, MS Water Consult, Spain
- Frederic Martin Fernandes, CEO, Bewater, Portugal (tbc)
- Elias Colom Hernandez, Director of Corporate Marketing & ESG, Global Omnium, Spain
- Khalid Tahri, Director of Planning, ONEE, Morocco
- Richard Lancaster, Global Head of Bioresources, AtkinsRealis, UK
- Chris Thornton, Secretary General European Sustainable Phosphorus Platform (ESPP), France
- Pavel Policar, Chairman, VAKH, Czech Republic

Stream 1 – Stewardship & System Design: How do we define and deliver desired outcomes at basin-scale?

1.1 From Watersheds to Water Systems: Scaling Regenerative Models

Climate change, increasing water variability and competing demands are driving a shift from managing individual assets to designing resilient, regenerative water systems at basin scale.

This session explores how infrastructure, nature-based solutions, digital intelligence and governance can be integrated to restore water cycles, strengthen resilience and deliver measurable environmental, social and economic outcomes.

- Integrated watershed and basin planning
- Scaling nature-based solutions alongside infrastructure
- Digital monitoring, optimisation and verification
- Multi-stakeholder governance and coordination
- Designing for drought, flood and increasing climate variability
- Delivering measurable basin-level outcomes

1.2 Water Positive 2.0 – Attribution, Additionality and Verified Impact

As the focus shifts from commitments to implementation, credible measurement and verification of outcomes becomes essential.

This session explores how impact can be **measured, attributed, verified and governed** to build trust and demonstrate genuine environmental, social and economic value.

- Ownership and accountability for basin-level outcomes
- Demonstrating additionality
- Attribution, contribution and shared outcomes
- Avoiding double counting and over-claiming
- Verification, assurance and governance
- Building trust through transparent methodologies

1.3 Nature as Infrastructure – Delivering Resilience at Scale

Nature-based solutions are increasingly recognised as core infrastructure for strengthening resilience, reducing risk and creating environmental and economic value. Scaling their impact requires natural and engineered assets to be planned, financed and delivered as integrated systems.

- Making nature-based solutions investable
- Integrating green and grey infrastructure
- Nature-based infrastructure for climate adaptation and resilience

- Quantifying environmental, economic and risk-reduction benefits
- Policy, regulation and finance for scale
- The role of nature-based solutions in scaling the Water-Positive Economy

1.4 Who Pays for Water Outcomes? – Creating Markets, Demand and Investment

Water resilience, restoration and resource recovery can create economic value as well as environmental impact. The opportunity is to build markets that connect measurable water outcomes with corporate demand and investment, creating new pathways for financing and implementation at basin scale.

Corporates can play a critical role by moving beyond commitments and using their capital, procurement, purchasing power and partnerships to create demand and accelerate delivery.

- Turning measurable water outcomes into investable opportunities
- Creating corporate demand for verified outcomes
- Moving from commitments to investment and implementation
- Funding, purchasing and co-investing in basin-level outcomes
- New market mechanisms and incentives
- Integrating water into procurement, supply chains and business strategy
- Measuring financial return and environmental impact
- Mobilising corporate and institutional capital at scale

1.5 Regenerative Agriculture and the Food-Water-Energy Nexus

Agriculture is the world's largest freshwater user, but also one of the greatest opportunities to improve water security and regenerate water systems at basin scale. Achieving this requires integrated approaches connecting farming, water management, technology and land use across entire catchments.

- Precision irrigation and digital agriculture
- Water reuse and alternative water resources
- Regenerative agriculture and soil health
- Connecting farm-level action to basin-scale outcomes
- Balancing food security with water sustainability
- Technology, policy and investment for scale

Steam 2: Digital Intelligence - How do we measure, optimise and verify performance?

2.1 Intelligent Water Systems – From Data to Decisions at Scale

Delivering **water abundance at scale** requires more than digitalising existing operations. It requires digital transformation that enables water systems to become **more intelligent, adaptive and resilient**. Digital twins, IoT and advanced analytics are accelerating this shift by turning data into real-time decisions, optimisation and increasingly intelligent control.

- Digital transformation as an enabler of water abundance
- Connecting digital twins, IoT and advanced analytics
- Optimising water, energy and asset performance in real time
- Turning data into operational and investment decisions
- Moving from insight to adaptive and automated control
- Scaling intelligence across entire water systems

2.2 From Pilots to Platforms – Scaling Digital Transformation Across the Water Sector

Digital innovation is accelerating, but the challenge is moving beyond pilots to organisation-wide transformation. Success requires integrated digital capabilities that connect technology, people and governance to deliver measurable operational, financial and environmental value.

- Moving beyond the "pilot trap" to scale
- Building interoperable platforms and systems
- Aligning digital strategy with operational and financial outcomes
- Workforce transformation and digital capability
- Procurement, partnerships and new delivery models
- Lessons from utilities scaling digital transformation

2.3 Tackling Non-Revenue Water – From Loss Reduction to Water-Positive Value Creation

Non-Revenue Water remains a major global challenge. Within the **Water-Positive Economy**, reducing NRW is one of the fastest and most cost-effective ways to increase water availability while delivering environmental, operational and financial value.

- Embedding NRW reduction into operations and culture
- Measuring water, energy and financial savings
- Financing NRW reduction at scale
- Corporate participation in water recovery
- Linking NRW reduction to basin resilience and water security
- Lessons from utilities delivering at scale

2.4 Digital Transformation and the Customer Interface – Engaging Customers in the Water-Positive Economy

Within the Water-Positive Economy, customers can become active partners in water stewardship. Digital technologies are enabling utilities to connect operations with customer engagement, supporting more informed decisions, efficient water use and shared outcomes.

- Connecting customer and operational platforms
- Real-time data, metering and consumption visibility
- AI and automation for responsive customer service
- Customer participation in efficiency and demand management

- Building trust through transparency and shared outcomes
- Creating more engaged, water-aware communities

2.5 WEX Global Basin Simulation Lab: From Allocation to Abundance

An immersive, role-based simulation that places participants inside a live basin-level water crisis, balancing competing demands from cities, agriculture, industry and the environment.

Through successive rounds, participants make real-time decisions on water allocation, investment, technology and risk, exploring how collaboration, innovation and governance can transform constrained systems into more resilient and productive ones.

By stepping into the role of decision-makers, participants experience the trade-offs, competing priorities and consequences of basin-level decision-making.

This is not a discussion. It is a real-time test of how we make decisions, build consensus and create value when not everyone can win

2.6 Cybersecurity, Data Governance and Trust

As water systems become increasingly digital and interconnected, cybersecurity, data governance and trust are critical to resilient infrastructure. The challenge is to enable innovation while protecting systems, data and operations from growing risks.

- Protecting critical infrastructure from cyber threats
- Data integrity, quality and reliability
- Managing risk across interconnected systems
- Data governance, ownership and ethics
- Building trust in digital water systems
- Lessons from securing digital transformation

Stream 3: Resilient & Circular Infrastructure – Creating Water, Resources and Value at Scale

3.1 New Water for Water Abundance – Expanding and Diversifying Supply

Water abundance cannot be delivered through efficiency and conservation alone. In water-stressed regions, **creating new, reliable sources of supply** will be essential to supporting cities, agriculture, industry and economic growth.

This session explores how desalination, water reuse and other non-conventional resources can be integrated into resilient water systems while addressing energy, environmental, financial and regulatory challenges.

- Desalination as a strategic source of water security
- Scaling potable and non-potable reuse
- Integrating conventional and non-conventional resources
- Building diversified and resilient water portfolios
- Reducing the energy and carbon intensity of new water
- Integrating renewable energy with desalination and advanced treatment
- Financing and delivering new supply at scale
- Innovation reducing the cost and footprint of new water

3.2 Biosolids to Bioeconomy – Transforming Waste into Value

Wastewater systems are evolving from treatment and disposal towards **integrated resource recovery**, transforming biosolids and organic waste into energy, nutrients and bio-based products while creating environmental and economic value.

- Transforming wastewater systems into resource-recovery hubs
- Energy optimisation and recovery, including biogas, biomethane and emerging fuels
- Nutrient recovery and sustainable agriculture
- Technologies for resource and value recovery
- Developing markets for recovered products
- Scaling from pilots to commercial deployment

3.3 From Treatment Plants to Blue-Green Economic Hubs

The next evolution of water infrastructure extends beyond individual treatment plants. By connecting **water, energy, waste, agriculture and industry**, utilities can become anchors for regional circular economies, creating new value through shared infrastructure, resource flows and cross-sector partnerships.

- Integrating water, energy and resource flows at regional scale
- Developing regional resource and infrastructure hubs
- Co-location and industrial symbiosis
- Creating markets and value chains for recovered resources
- Investment and partnership models for integrated infrastructure
- Policy and regulation enabling cross-sector systems
- Moving from individual facilities to regional-scale implementation

3.4 The Climate-Resilient City – Integrating Water Systems for Resilience

Cities face growing pressure from climate change, population growth and ageing infrastructure. Building resilience requires integrating diversified water supply, energy, reuse, resource recovery, nature and digital infrastructure within a coordinated urban water system.

- Diversifying and securing urban water supplies
- Integrating reuse and circular water systems
- Adaptive and resilient infrastructure
- Digital intelligence for planning and real-time management
- Water-energy optimisation and resource recovery
- Adapting to drought, flooding and climate extremes
- Lessons from cities delivering integrated water strategies

3.5 The Industrial Water Transition – From Consumption to Circularity

Industry can significantly **reduce freshwater dependency while creating value from water and wastewater streams**. Scaling this transition requires reuse, closed-loop systems, resource recovery and stronger collaboration between industry, utilities and technology providers.

- Reducing freshwater dependency
- Closed-loop systems and water reuse
- Alternative water sources for industry
- Optimising water and energy use across industrial operations
- Industrial symbiosis and shared infrastructure
- Resource recovery from industrial wastewater
- Reducing water, energy and carbon intensity through circular systems
- Building the business case for circularity
- Scaling solutions across industrial systems and supply chains

Stream 4 – Finance, Markets, Policy and Sustainable Development: How do we Mobilise Investment and Scale Implementation?

4.1 Beyond Capital – How IFIs Are Shaping the Future of Water and Climate Resilience

As water stress intensifies, IFIs, development banks and sovereign funds are becoming catalysts for large-scale water transformation by mobilising capital, reducing risk and connecting water investment with climate resilience and sustainable economic development. The challenge now is to turn capital and ambition into investable projects, faster deployment and measurable impact at scale.

- From funders to strategic development partners
- Aligning financial, environmental and social outcomes
- Financing climate-resilient water infrastructure and adaptation
- Blended finance for scalable impact
- Guarantees and technical assistance to reduce risk

- Building international investment partnerships
- Accelerating projects from investment to implementation

4.2 From Bankability to Delivery – Financing & Partnerships for Scale

The water investment gap is becoming a **critical barrier to implementation**. Capital is available, but too few projects become bankable and move into delivery. Closing this gap requires financing and partnership models that **mobilise public and private capital, allocate risk effectively and connect investment with implementation at scale.**

Blended finance and next-generation PPPs can play a critical role by moving beyond traditional project financing towards **strategic partnerships that combine capital, innovation, expertise and shared accountability.**

- Making water projects investable and bankable
- Accelerating projects from development to implementation
- Blended finance to mobilise private capital
- Next-generation PPP and partnership models
- Effective risk allocation and risk-transfer mechanisms
- Valuing resilience and climate-risk reduction within investment decisions
- Mobilising capital and innovation in emerging markets
- Moving from asset delivery to system-level outcomes
- Adapting successful financing and partnership models across markets

Stream 5: Collaboration & Innovation– Turning Vision into Action.

5.1 WEX Global Utilities Rotational Round Tables

A flagship WEX Global session bringing together senior utility leaders to define priorities, share challenges, and engage directly with partners in a highly interactive round table discussion format.

This is a fast-moving rotating round table session in which 20 leading utilities each host a discussion to present their challenges for the future.

- Choose a utility and join the table.
- Meet the utility table host and exchange contacts with your fellow guests.
- Learn about the challenges and plans of the utility and exchange ideas with your fellow round table members
- Joining three separate discussions will leave you with new contacts, new ideas and new business opportunities.

5.2 Partnerships for Progress – From Collaboration to Delivery (Rotational Round Tables)

A solution-focused format designed to accelerate collaboration and move from dialogue to delivery.

Expert-led roundtables bring together leaders from industry, agriculture and regulation to address practical challenges including water risk, compliance, circular systems, infrastructure finance and measurable basin-level outcomes.

Each table focuses on actionable solutions, partnership models and pathways to implementation. Three rotations expose participants to different perspectives while building the cross-sector relationships needed to align policy, investment and delivery around shared water challenges.

5.3 WEX Global Innovation Forum

A regular and very popular session at WEX Global. This interactive forum features a discussion on innovation by our expert panel followed by short presentations by 6 innovative technologies from invited companies.

Each presentation is followed by questions, analysis and debate involving both the audience and jurists. The panel will ultimately decide upon the winner of the annual Innovation Forum Award at WEX Global to be presented at the Gala Dinner on the 2nd of February