



IWRA

INTERNATIONAL WATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION  
**TERMS OF REFERENCE**  
TO HOST & ORGANISE  
AN

# ISLANDS WATER CONGRESS

This document explains the process of selecting the host and organiser for an IWRA Islands Water Congress, and describes in detail the various roles and responsibilities.



[www.iwra.org](http://www.iwra.org)  
[www.islandswatercongress.org](http://www.islandswatercongress.org)



# ABOUT IWRA CONGRESSES



## DECADES OF IWRA CONGRESS EXPERTISE

The World Water Congress is IWRA's largest event and has been held every 2-3 years in different cities around the world for more than 50 years. Its objective is to provide a meeting place to share experiences, promote discussion, and present new knowledge, research results and developments in the fields of water sciences and policy around the world. The World Water Congresses have grown to become one of the most respected and anticipated events for the identification of major global themes concerning the water agenda and for bringing together large cross-sections of between 1,000 to 3,000 stakeholders for the development and implementation of decisions in the field of water.

The first IWRA World Water Congress was held in 1973 on the theme of the "Importance and Problems of Water in the Human Environment in Modern Times" and formed part of the international water community's first earnest attempts to address global water issues (e.g., the ground-breaking Stockholm Declaration of 1972 and the Mar del Plata conference of 1977). Since then, the Congress has been held on every inhabited continent spanning eighteen different countries, each time attracting high profile international attention and bringing together major water stakeholders.

2025	Marrakech, Morocco
2023	Beijing, China
2021	Daegu, Rep. of Korea
2017	Cancun, Mexico
2015	Edinburgh, Scotland
2011	Porto de Galinhas, Brazil
2008	Montpellier, France
2005	New Delhi, India
2003	Madrid, Spain
2000	Melbourne, Australia
1997	Montreal, Canada
1994	El Cairo, Egypt
1991	Rabat, Morocco
1988	Ottawa, Canada
1985	Brussels, Belgium
1982	Buenos Aires, Argentina
1979	Mexico City, Mexico
1975	New Delhi, India
1973	Chicago, U.S.A

# ABOUT IWRA ISLANDS WATER CONGRESSES



## IWRA's ISLANDS WATER CONGRESS SERIES

Building on this brand, IWRA also supports smaller/shorter congresses for hosts that are looking to hold events that have a regional or thematic focus over a period of up to three days. Starting in 2024, IWRA has added to its event portfolio a new series of congresses focusing on "Freshwater and Islands". Happening every 2 years on a different island, these unique congresses aim to address the unique challenges and opportunities related to water resources faced by islands worldwide. The advantages of organising an IWRA Islands Water Congress are many and varied, depending on the wishes and the objectives of the hosts.

While all island communities share commonalities, they are also all unique. Even islands within the same country or region can vary significantly from each other. But water resource management in an island context holds some special considerations that are not often met by the governance applied to countries on continents. Historic relationships, scale, and changes in climate, economic activities, and demography, mean that islands often act as both warning systems of water challenges, and as great

testing grounds for new solutions. IWRA's Islands Water Congress benefits from the experience and expertise within IWRA, highlighting emerging developments and thought leadership on how to tackle global water management issues, but with a clear focus on islands.

By organising a Congress every two years on different islands, IWRA will develop a body of learning that will boost freshwater opportunities and advance solutions to freshwater challenges.

In 2024, the 1<sup>st</sup> Islands Water Congress, hosted in collaboration with the Faroese Geological Survey (Jarðfeingi), focused on "Freshwater: Administration, Collaboration and Innovation." Drawing on experience and expertise from across the world, it provided practical tools for the island host partner to tackle specific water-related issues, while also catering to a global audience of islands and small island developing states.

As in all IWRA events, we intend to leave a significant legacy in our host countries. Our 1st Islands Water Congress was no exception.



# ABOUT IWRA ISLANDS WATER CONGRESSES



## Key Outcomes of the First Edition of the IWRA Islands Water Congress

### MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between two island nations, establishing the Tórshavn Dialogue on Sustainable Freshwater Management on Islands. This partnership aims to foster collaboration on freshwater management across island communities.

### POLICY REPORT

The IWRA Islands Water Congress Policy Report was conceptualised and is scheduled for release in early 2025. This report will include recommendations and guidelines for policymakers, focusing on sustainable water management in island settings, and a section dedicated to the host island.

### IWRA TASK FORCE ON ISLANDS AND WATER

A new IWRA Task Force on Islands and Water will soon be established. This task force will drive engagement and ensure that the unique perspectives of island communities are incorporated into IWRA's upcoming XIX World Water Congress in 2025.

### SPECIAL JOURNAL ISSUES

Two special issues of Water International and the Island Studies Journal are being planned. These publications will feature selected papers from the Islands Congress, highlighting key research and insights.

### ADVANCEMENT OF A WATER ACT

The Congress played a pivotal role in advancing the Water Act for the host island. The act is set to be discussed and approved by the Faroese Parliament in 2025.

### LEGAL EXPERT GROUP

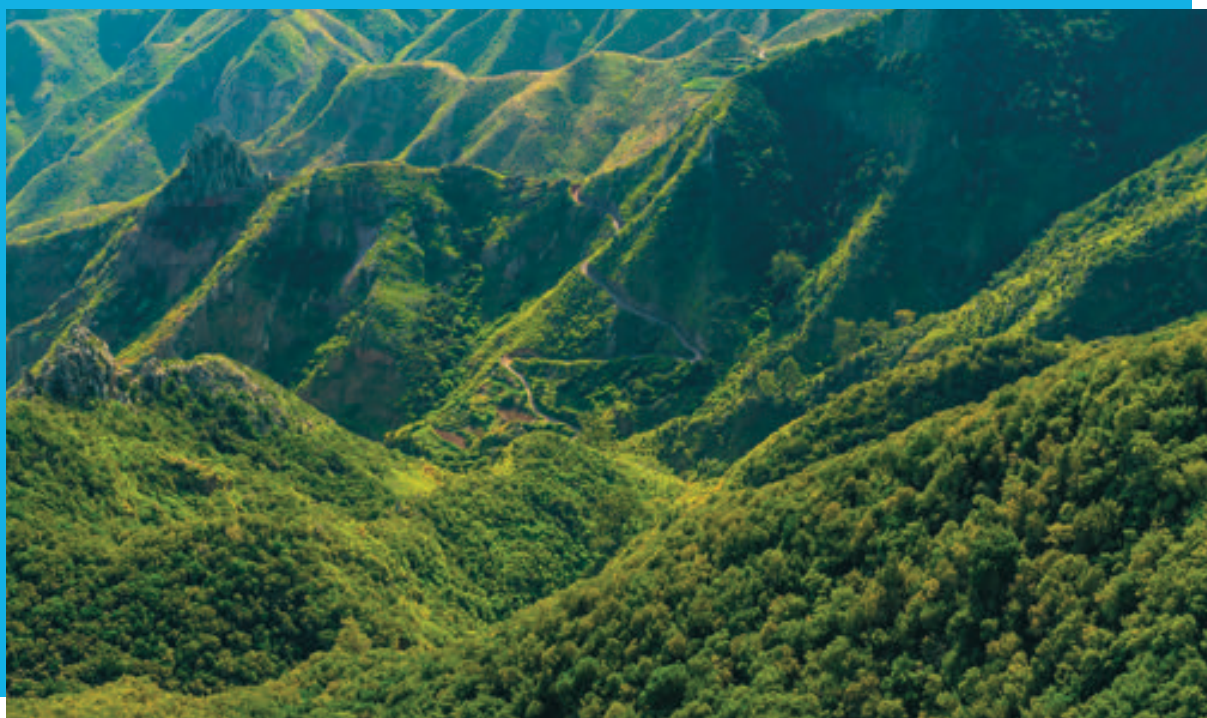
A legal expert group, composed of relevant members of the Islands Congress International Scientific Committee, has been formed to advise on the reform of the new water law for the Faroe Islands.

Hosting an IWRA Islands Water Congress offers the opportunity to be part of something truly impactful, leaving a legacy not only for the host island but also for other island nations and communities globally. The solutions and innovations shared during the Congress can serve as solutions to the global water challenges that affect both island and non-island regions alike.

### IWRA's 1<sup>st</sup> Islands Water Congress (4-6 September 2024) in numbers:

- 196 participants
- 81 speakers from over 40 countries/islands from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, North, Central and South America, as well as Oceania.
- 15 Regular Sessions
- 10 Keynote Speakers
- 7 Keynote Plenary Sessions
- 5 Special Sessions
- 4 Creative Showcases
- 1 High-Level Policy Roundtable
- Presentations related to 33 Islands and
- 4 Islands Groupings
- 1 Cultural Field trip
- 1 Technical Field trip

# ABOUT IWRA ISLANDS WATER CONGRESSES



## BENEFITS OF HOSTING & ORGANISING AN IWRA ISLANDS WATER CONGRESS

### LEADERSHIP

Generates high international focus on the host island regarding water resources – in particular for researchers, universities, think tanks, decision-makers, water authorities, private companies and non-government organisations.

### COLLABORATION

Helps to build synergy within the local and national water community. This facilitates cooperation, fosters a constructive dynamic and opens new opportunities in the water sector.

### REPUTATION

Promotes local and national water expertise on a regional scale. The Congress provides a platform to contribute to international scientific and policy debates about key water issues.

### REVENUE

Provides economic and tourist benefits for the host island with the arrival of Congress participants.

### PROFILE

Promotes the island at the regional level: underlining its capacities, research excellence, policy relevance and ability to contribute to the global water sector.

### RECOGNITION

Both IWRA and our Congresses are well established and globally recognised brands in the water sector. IWRA commits to aiding the hosts to engage the media/press and other international organisations.

### EXPERTISE

An IWRA Islands Water Congress brings various high-level experts as speakers and attracts high-level personalities, including well-known politicians and heads of large international organisations.

### NETWORKING

Provides excellent opportunities for networking with the island and non-island water communities.

### LEGACY

Our congress leaves a legacy by fostering relationships, creating meaningful experiences, and generating a positive impact on communities that extends far beyond the event itself.

# ABOUT IWRA ISLANDS WATER CONGRESSES



## WHO ATTENDS AND WHY

### PRACTITIONERS

#### (water managers and technicians)

- Connect with professionals, experts, and peers in the water industry;
- Share experiences, challenges, and best practices;
- Learn about cutting-edge technologies, innovations, and research in water management;
- Gain insights into emerging trends, regulations, and industry standards;
- Explore case studies and success stories that could offer ideas for addressing your own challenges;
- Get inspired by success stories, innovative projects, and advancements in water management;
- Understand global water challenges, conservation efforts, and the importance of sustainable water management.

### PRIVATE SECTOR

#### (industry and company representatives)

- Gain valuable insights into industry trends, market demands, and emerging technologies;
- Explore new business opportunities, partnerships, and joint ventures;
- Stay informed about regulatory changes that may affect your business operations;
- Establish connections with decision-makers, industry influencers, and experts;

- Build relationships that could lead to business growth and partnerships;
- Participate in panel discussions, workshops, and presentations to establish your company as a leader.

### POLICYMAKERS

#### (politicians and technocrats)

- Learn about successful policies and strategies implemented in different regions;
- Exchange ideas, experiences, and best practices with peers from around the world;
- Gain insights into public perspectives, concerns, and priorities regarding water issues;
- Use this information to better communicate policies and engage with voters;
- Use your platform to drive positive change in water management practices.

### ACADEMICS/RESEARCHERS

#### (from the sciences, policy, and law)

- Stay updated on the latest research trends, findings, and advancements in water-related studies;
- Establish collaborations, partnerships, and potential research projects;
- Attend workshops, training sessions, and seminars to enhance your research skills and methodologies;
- Contribute to global efforts in addressing water-related challenges.



# ABOUT IWRA

## INTERNATIONAL WATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION

IWRA is an international, non-governmental, non-political, non-profit, and development-oriented association. It is recognised and respected as a leading proponent in advancing the understanding and management of water resources worldwide since its establishment in 1971. IWRA members are from all parts of the world and represent every profession and academic discipline involved in the sustainable management of the world's water resources.

IWRA aims to build and strengthen partnerships and mechanisms to address water resource challenges worldwide. It provides a global, knowledge-based forum for bridging disciplines and geographies by connecting professionals, students, policymakers, corporations, and institutions who are concerned with the sustainable use of the world's water resources. The Association strongly endorses and promotes water resources education and research based on sound scientific, social, and ethical principles, worldwide and for all sectors of society. IWRA seeks to continually improve water resource decision-making by improving our collective understanding of the physical, ecological, chemical, institutional, social, and economic aspects of water.

### SPECIFICALLY, IWRA AIMS TO

- Provide an international, regional, and national forum for water resources issues;
- Enhance the quality of knowledge used for decision-making;
- Promote cutting-edge research that improves the understanding of water resource issues and policy options;
- Improve global access to water related information;
- Facilitate exchanges of information and expertise between countries and professions; and
- Network with complementary organisations.

### IWRA ACHIEVES THESE AIMS THROUGH

- The flagship World Water Congresses, Special Congresses, and the Islands Water Congress Series;
- Publication of Water International, the official journal of the Association;
- Publication of definitive books on different aspects of water management;
- Development of specific projects on main water topics with key partners;
- Co-sponsorship of major conferences, symposia seminars and workshops;
- Sharing the latest news and knowledge via our website and social media channels;
- Organisation of Webinars, online Masterclasses, and production of Policy Briefs; and
- Participating in and undertaking various research activities.



## APPLICATION & TERMS OF REFERENCE



### STEP 1 – EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Expressions of Interest (Eoi) should be addressed to the IWRA Executive Office by email to [office@iwra.org](mailto:office@iwra.org) with [islands.congress@iwra.org](mailto:islands.congress@iwra.org) in copy. Eoi should be a maximum of 2 pages, stating:

1. The lead bidding organisation;
2. Who else would host the Islands Water Congress;
3. Where the Islands Water Congress would be held;
4. Preferred dates for hosting the Islands Water Congress;
5. The motivation for hosting the Islands Water Congress;
6. The preferred main theme of the Islands Water Congress;
7. Who commits to pay the hosting fee;
8. The institutional resources available to support the hosting of the Islands Water Congress;
9. The proposed venue and maximum capacity of this facility;
10. Agreement with the terms of reference of this document;

All Eoi will be reviewed by the IWRA Congress & Events Committee, with approved candidates requested to submit a full written application to host the IWRA Islands Water Congress by an agreed deadline.

### STEP 2 – FULL WRITTEN APPLICATIONS

Full applications should be submitted in digital format to [office@iwra.org](mailto:office@iwra.org) and [islands.congress@iwra.org](mailto:islands.congress@iwra.org). IWRA's Executive Office will support the bidders through this process to ensure that the submitted documents are as complete as possible.

Full applications should include the following elements:

1. An official proposal letter from the head of the bidding organisation;
2. Letters of support, from the co-coordinators and the principal funders of the Congress;
3. A detailed proposal explaining:
  - a. Experience of the bid organisation in the water sector, including any past events;
  - b. Suitability of the proposed location (description of conference facilities for plenaries, concurrent sessions, exhibitors, posters, side events, press conferences, interpreter facilities and VIPs; local accommodation, transport links, technical/cultural visits; hotel and other accommodation options; visa requirements; engagement with local community educational programmes; green credentials, and other relevant details);
  - c. Key partners within and outside the host island, and links to other international water events;
  - d. The mechanisms that will be created to manage the various aspects of the Islands Water Congress, such as logistics, promotion, attendee registration, budgeting, and accounting, in accordance with the term of reference;
  - e. Any official languages of the Islands Water Congress in addition to English, and whether simultaneous translation will be made available for other languages;
  - f. Proposed dates – the Congress shall last for 2-3 consecutive days, starting on a date of the hosts' own choosing in September, October, or November of the relevant year, and with consideration to the expected timing of other significant water conferences, such as IWRA World Water Congresses and Stockholm Water Week, as well as any significant holidays and other global events;
  - g. Proposed timetable/milestones to organise the Islands Water Congress, including delivery of a website ready to go live at least 12 months prior to the Islands Water Congress, communications, promotional material/activities, registration, etc.



## APPLICATION & TERMS OF REFERENCE

### 4. Congress Content;

- a. A proposed overarching theme for the Islands Water Congress with justification, which will be agreed upon in conjunction with IWRA if the bidder's application is accepted. Please provide details on the proposed overarching theme and any subthemes, including examples of high-level panel discussions, special sessions, keynote speakers, opening /closing ceremonies, etc.
- b. Details on the types of content the bidding organisation intends to have in the Islands Water Congress. Examples include the presentation of the academic research papers in "regular sessions" and via "posters"; the presentation of projects in "special sessions" led by attending organisations; "high level panels" in plenary sessions; "academic workshops" run by the host organisation; cultural programmes; etc.
- c. IWRA commits to supporting the development of content using its extensive network of experts and to invite various high-level experts and personalities as speakers. Please provide a description of how the bidding organisation will also develop substantive content, and what further support is expected from IWRA;
- d. The bidding organisation should provide details on the mechanisms for submitting, collecting, and reviewing abstracts for individual presentations and/or proposals for special sessions by organisations, as well as for selecting those who will be invited to present at the Islands Water Congress.

### 5. Social Programme, Technical Visits, and Other Activities;

- a. Basic details on the social programme that is proposed for attendees, including a VIP welcome reception for invited guests the night prior to the Opening Ceremony; and a gala dinner, on-site lunches, and cultural activities, open to all attendees. Please specify how the costs for these activities will be covered (e.g. included in registration or ticketed separately);
- b. Basic details on accompanying guest activities;
- c. Basic details on technical visits.

### 6. Financial considerations;

- a. Demonstrate financial stability of the bidding organisation and capacity to finance the proposed budget directly and/or through identified sponsors;
- b. Proposed budget to host and organise the Islands Water Congress, including:
  - The Islands Water Congress hosting fee paid to IWRA. The fee is €100.000 and shall be paid in advance in the agreed instalments;

- All travel, accommodation and incidental expenses related to a site visit of the conference venue for two IWRA representatives, to be selected by IWRA, at least 10 months prior to the Islands Water Congress;
- Travel, accommodation, and Congress registration costs to the venue for a minimum of 8 individuals, to be nominated by IWRA, will be covered by the bidding organisation;
- The registration costs for any IWRA staff and Board members will be waived by the organisers;
- All registration fees, sponsorship and exhibition revenues will be kept by the host organisation;
- Agreement that the entire financing of the organisation of the Islands Water Congress is the responsibility of the bidder; IWRA shall not be exposed to any financial losses incurred through the organisation or hosting of the Islands Water Congress;
- The Host organisation agrees to hold monthly update teleconferences with the IWRA Executive Office beginning from when the MoA is signed.

### 7. Acceptance of the Terms of Reference of this document;

8. Contact details of the bidding organisation, key contact person and team members who will work on the Islands Water Congress preparation.

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### STEP 3 – DECISION BY THE IWRA EXECUTIVE BOARD

Following a review of the full applications of all bidders by the IWRA Congress and Events Committee, a report will be made to the IWRA Executive Board for its final determination.

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### STEP 4– SIGNING THE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Once a bid is accepted by the IWRA Board, a Memorandum of Agreement will be negotiated and signed in advance of any public announcement of the Islands Water Congress.

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### STEP 5 – ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE WINNER

If possible, the Host of an IWRA Islands Water Congress will attend an upcoming IWRA World Water Congress or Islands Water Congress to announce their successful candidature and to create links to their Islands Water Congress.

# DETAILED TERMS OF REFERENCE



Applicants to host an IWRA Islands Water Congress must elaborate on the delivery of these detailed terms of reference when submitting their full application:

## MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION

The Host organisation will establish a National Organising Committee (NOC) with the ability to manage budgets, that will be supported by a local Congress Secretariat. Together, they will be responsible for:

- Overall logistics, management, and coordination of the Islands Water Congress including:
  - contracting with a venue of an appropriate size;
  - arranging hotel or other suitable accommodation rates for attendees;
  - identification and logistics for meals that will be included with registration;
  - transportation for field/ technical trips, logistics for other related features of the Congress (e.g., Gala Dinner, Awards Ceremonies, VIP Events, etc).
- Liaison with IWRA Executive Office:
  - Checking of precedent and procedures;
  - Updating IWRA on a regular basis;
  - Monthly teleconferences with IWRA;
  - Advance review of principal promotional items;
  - Ad-hoc communication as required.
- Financial control of the budget and keeping of accounts:
  - Writing the budget;
  - Opening bank accounts;
  - Local or government tax law commitments;
  - Keeping books of account;
  - Monitoring cash flow and funding accounts;
  - Checking bank statements;
  - Checking invoices and paying accounts;
  - Monitoring expenditures within the approved budget;
  - Control of financial contributions fund, and sponsorship funds;
  - Receiving registration fees and other income;
  - Monitoring non-payments;
  - Advice on insurance needs (Public Liability and Abandonment);

- Advice on transfer of funds (country to country);
- Investment of surplus funds for revenue;
- Production of final accounts.

## PRESS

The Host organisation is responsible for:

- Accreditation to attend the Islands Water Congress;
- Press releases;
- Press briefings;
- Press officer;
- Post-congress press releases;
- On-site arrangements;
- Press coverage during the event.

## PROMOTION AND COMMUNICATIONS

The promotional material, publicity, publications, social media channels and websites should be proposed by the Host organisation and approved by IWRA. Publications typically include (but are not limited to):

- Save the Date announcements and Call for Papers;
- Pre-event newsletters;
- Sponsorship and exhibition calls;
- Posters and brochures;
- Congress Programme;
- Participant lists.

The related tasks include (but are not limited to):

- Creation of a logo and choice of colour scheme for print;
- Design of layout;
- Standard and extent of each print item;
- Collation and production of "copy" for each print item;
- Translation of "copy" for each print item into the official languages;
- Establishing and maintaining print deadlines;
- Proof-reading in all languages;
- Liaison with print companies on deliveries;
- Liaison with printers and branded material suppliers both before and during the Islands Water Congress;
- Development of a Congress mobile application;
- Video recording of all plenary sessions, including opening and closing ceremonies.

## WEBSITES

- An IWRA Islands Water Congress website will be an important mechanism to communicate about the Congress and to interact with participants. The Host is responsible for creating and maintaining this website, which will contain:
  - Promotional material;
  - Information on how to register;
  - The Islands Water Congress Programme;
  - Practical informational regarding accommodation, transport, access, etc.
- Clear identification of the event as an IWRA event;

# DETAILED TERMS OF REFERENCE

- The IWRA Islands Water Congress website should also link to a collaborative online platform(developed or chosen by the Host) to collect and assess abstracts and special session proposals. If possible, it should be linked to the online registration system to match submissions with registrations to support the preparatory process of the Islands Water Congress. All material received is to be copied to IWRA following the Congress in an organised format,;
- Both the website and collaborative online platform must be ready to go live 12 months prior to the congress.
- Breakout space for meetings of participants;
- Space for press;
- Space for technical exposition;
- Space for poster presentations;
- High speed Wi-Fi Internet access;
- A Gala Dinner space for invited and/or paying guests one evening of the Congress.

## THEMES

- The Host will establish, in collaboration with IWRA, an International Scientific Committee (ISC) responsible for the technical content of the Congress, made up of local and international representatives;
- The ISC will be responsible for proposing the final overarching theme and sub-themes for the IWRA Islands Water Congress and managing the call for and review of all abstracts and session proposals;
- The theme proposed in the bid document may be modified for the successful bid, depending on future liaison between the Host organisation, IWRA and the ISC;
- The final theme and sub-themes are subject to approval by IWRA.

## TECHNICAL EXPOSITIONS AND SPONSORSHIP

Conditions for any technical expositions and sponsorship packages are proposed by the bidding organisation with final approval by IWRA. The proposal should include a fully equipped stand for IWRA at no charge.

## TECHNICAL VISITS/FIELD TRIPS

The Host organisation is responsible for:

- Choice of visits and organisers;
- Invitations and ticketing;
- Liaison with organisers;
- Arrangements, coaches, guides, meals;
- Communications to registered attendees of the technical/field trips.

## FACILITIES

Depending on the final programme, for guidance purposes, space requirements typically include:

- A plenary room that can accommodate all attendees;
- 3-5 rooms for parallel sessions with space for 50-100 attendees in each one;
- Rooms for special session and side event;
- Separate coordination rooms for the Host staff, IWRA staff, and other groups with management or organisational responsibilities
- A VIP reception room;

## LANGUAGE/TRANSLATION

The official language of the congress and all related material is English. An IWRA Islands Water Congress may have other official languages that may also be used, so long as adequate translation is provided, at least, for English language speakers. Additional languages may also be used depending on the location of the Congress, participants involved, and the translation services provided.

## ACCOMMODATION

Typically, the Host organisation is responsible for:

- Negotiating favourable rates for a range of hotels to be offered in different price categories;
- Agreement/contracts with hotels and colleges;
- Liaison with hotels and colleges, notification, rooming lists, deposits, cancellations.

## REGISTRATION MANAGEMENT

Registration procedure:

- Deciding the fees to attend the Islands Water Congress in consultation with IWRA. The Congress is open to anyone wishing to attend;
- IWRA Gold Members must receive a discount to attend the Congress;
- Discounts are usually also offered for "early bird" registrations, as well as to people from developing countries and to students.
- Setting-up systems, manual or computerised;
- Organisation and supervision of kit packing, badge production, pre-ordered tickets;
- Registration must include on-site lunches.
- Advance registrations:
  - Receipt and monitoring of registration fees;
  - Maintenance of registration fee bank account;
  - Issuing of confirmations and receipts;
  - Handling cancellations and refunds;
  - Collecting unpaid fees;
  - Repayment of overpayments received.

On-site registrations:

- Setting-up desk registration system;
- Cashier arrangements;
- On-site ticketing, name badges, distribution of papers and congress kits;
- Updates to the participant list.





# **International Water Resources Association**



The IWRA Executive Office is happy to field any questions on hosting an IWRA Islands Water Congress.

**PLEASE CONTACT**

IWRA Executive Office,

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Email: [islands.congress@iwra.org](mailto:islands.congress@iwra.org)



[www.iwra.org](http://www.iwra.org)  
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