

## **Guidelines for Hosting the 5<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Water Summit**

The Asia-Pacific Water Forum (APWF) is currently seeking expressions of interest from national governments willing to host and organize the 5<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Water Summit (APWS).

### **Expression of interest required by 22 August 2024**

#### **1. Principles and Formats**

##### **1.1 Background**

The objective of the Asia-Pacific Water Forum (APWF) is to raise the priority of tackling water security issues highlighted in the development agenda of the Asia-Pacific region by promoting the active exchange of information, knowledge and skills across institutions and people in Asia and the Pacific in the pursuance of water security as an indispensable part of the development process. The APWF was created in 2006, under the impetus of late Prime Minister of Japan, Ryutaro Hashimoto, and is currently presided by former Prime Minister of Japan, Yoshiro Mori. APWF members have been consisted of a wide variety of water-related organizations in the region who address the various water issues derived from the diversity and history of Asia and the Pacific to improve water security.

In calling for the creation of the APWF at the 4<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum in Mexico in 2006, the region's water ministers sought to establish an effective mechanism to encourage more collaborative efforts on water resources management and to accelerate the process of effective integration of water resources management into the socio-economic development process of the region. The Asia-Pacific Water Ministerial Meeting also called upon the APWF to organize Asia-Pacific Water Summits, to be held once every three years.

The primary objective of the Asia-Pacific Water Summit (APWS) is to create an opportunity for the political leaders of the Asia-Pacific region to set a course of action for the sustainable development of the region from the perspective on water, so as to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The APWS brings together leaders of the region and showcase leadership indecision-making, excellence in practice and innovation, and concrete results that have had substantial impacts on the policy going down to the grassroots levels. The dialogue with other leaders at the APWS facilitates finding a shared direction for region's future actions to address the imminent water crisis in the world.

Four summits have been so far, where host countries took the leadership, Japan the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> APWS in 2007 and 2022, respectively, the Kingdom of Thailand the 2<sup>nd</sup> APWS in 2013; and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar the 3<sup>rd</sup> APWS in 2017.

The 1<sup>st</sup> APWS, under the theme *Water Security: Leadership and Commitment*, was held in Beppu City, Oita Prefecture, Japan in December 2007. The summit provided a forum for the region to focus its attention and energy on the pressing water challenges, to exchange ideas and good practices and to commit to taking action. 371 leaders including 10 heads of country and 32 ministers joined and called for the necessity to address water and sanitation targets of

the Millennium Development Goals, then adopted a “Message from Beppu” to achieve the target of universal water and sanitation access by 2025. It was the first water summit that also highlighted the importance of addressing water-related disasters to be placed on higher priority of the global development agenda.

The Kingdom of Thailand took the leadership for the 2<sup>nd</sup> APWS in Chiang Mai, 2013. More than 300 leaders, including 18 heads of country and 16 ministers joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> APWS and adopted the “Chiang Mai Declaration”. It called on the leaders of the region to focus attention on water and sanitation issues, water disaster prevention, climate adaptation, irrigation and pollution, and to promote the efficient integration of regional information network and communications systems to improve water resources management in socio-economic development. As a result, the outcomes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> APWS were reflected in the goals and targets of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015.

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> APWS held in December of 2017, the Republic of Myanmar took the leadership to set out a course and pathways for sustainable development of the Asia-Pacific region through water security. A total number of the participants in the APWS were more than 700 from 37 countries, which included 20 heads of country and ministerial-level delegates from 16 countries in the region. The 3<sup>rd</sup> APWS served as a communication platform for the regional leaders to discuss concrete actions in enhancing regional cooperation for integrated water resources management, promoting water-based economy and implementing globally agreed agenda. In the end, the “Yangon Declaration: the Pathway Forward” was adopted unanimously by the participating leaders. The Yangon Declaration calls for actions to achieve water security for sustainable development through four pillars: sound water cycle management; governance and inclusive development; financing the implementation of water-related SDGs, and water cooperation at all levels.

The 4<sup>th</sup> APWS was held in a hybrid format, in Kumamoto City, Kumamoto Prefecture, Japan and online on April 23 and 24 of 2022, It took place shortly after the COVID-19 pandemic, placed the water challenges amid the recovery of the pandemic and the vital role that the water sector has in this recovering. 18 heads of state and government (HSG) and 33 ministerial-level representatives among other high levels across the region participated in a variety of ways, either face to face or online or through video messages. The Kumamoto Declaration expressed the collective understanding and strong determination of the participating heads of state and government that recovery from the pandemic requires transformation into quality-oriented societies that are resilient, sustainable, and inclusive. To realize such quality-oriented society, it will be needed to strengthen the development of quality infrastructure for the water sector, integrating both hard and soft components, including knowledge, information and data management. Voluntary commitments were made to work towards improving governance, closing the financial gap and appeal to the science and technology community to provide context-specific innovation for resolving water problems.

## **2 Structure Plans of the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS**

### **2-1 Scope**

The 5<sup>th</sup> APWS will be built on the outcomes of the 4<sup>th</sup> APWS and achievements in the region, including the 10<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, and will discuss the solutions and upscale innovation on the ground of the Asia and the Pacific region. The 5<sup>th</sup> APWS aims to review milestones of

outcomes and cases of action made by the public and private sectors, convene continued steadfast efforts and partnerships to drive solutions and innovation on the ground, and to scale up investment in Water for Sustainable Development in the Asia and Pacific region. The 5<sup>th</sup> APWS will be perfectly aligned with the UN International Decade for Action 2018-2028, and the UN-Water Conference planned in 2026 and 2028 when making the case in our region will be better understood and well presented as our regional contribution to UN SDGs.

## **2.2 Institutional set-up**

The 5<sup>th</sup> APWS will be co-organized by a host country and the APWF. The APWF Secretariat, with its experience organizing the APWSs four times in the past, remains earnestly committed to working with the host country and regional stakeholders to ensure its success.

A joint steering committee (JSC), co-organized by the host country and the APWF Secretariat, will be established for the operations, including the examinations of the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS thematic focuses, agenda and program, outputs, invitee planning and the management of the participants, logistics, and security, media promotion, etc.

The JSC will then establish the Joint Executive Committee, which consists of APWF and host country representatives and other intellectuals and experts nominated by the JSC to ensure the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS to be operated smoothly and successfully by providing necessary advice and guidance to the Joint Steering Committee of the 5<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Water Summit

## **3. Application Procedures and the Selection of the Host Country and Venue**

The first step in the application process is to submit an official letter expressing the willingness and capacity to organize such a significant event through the Expression of Interest (EOI) to the APWF Secretariat.

EOI to host the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS should be delivered to the APWF Secretariat by 22 August 2024. Submitting an EOI indicates that the applicant is prepared to meet the criteria for the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS.

The APWF Secretariat will then conduct the bidding process to the national governments of any country in the region that submitted to the EOI.

It is expected that the candidate country will be able to meet the following criteria.

### **◆ Criteria**

- 1) A host country is expected to send an invitation signed by the head of state/government or the equivalent level to the other heads of state and government in the Asia-Pacific region<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Countries and regions of the APWF

Afghanistan, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Fiji, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Niue, Nepal, New

- 2) A host country has the capacity to develop an appropriate budget and implementation plans to organize the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS.
- 3) Regarding funding, the host country is expected to bear a significant portion of the costs involved in hosting the event.
- 4) The host government, including the relevant organizations in the host country, is expected to conduct the fund-raising activities jointly with the APWF Secretariat to secure sufficient funds to organize the APWS.

After receiving the EOI, the APWF Secretariat will request the candidate country to prepare a Planning Paper for the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS, following the format provided by the APWF Secretariat.

◆ Required information in the Planning Paper

1) Outline

- a) Willingness to host the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS
- b) Host City
- c) Preferable year and month to host the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS and its rationales
- d) Themes and topics which the host country would like to address and the reasons

2) Logistics

- a) Name of the venue to host the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS and the capacity (e.g., number of rooms, accessibility, and availability of VIP rooms)
- b) A hotel list for the participants of top level of governments
- c) Transportation (transportation options between hotels, the nearest international airport, and the summit venue)
- d) Safety and security
  - Safety and security plan provided by police in and around the summit venue and hotels

3) Budget

- Overall budget plan

◆ Notes:

**When you make the Planning Paper, the following notes should also be considered.**

● **The number of invitees**

A host country will finally decide the number of invitees for the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS within the country and from overseas. Please note that the amount of budget estimation is subject to change in accordance with the ways of planning and the actual preparation.

● **National Steering Committee**

The host country is expected to establish a National Steering Committee to prepare the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS, which consists of a wide range of ministers and the relevant organizations of the host country.

- **Joint Steering Committee** (International Steering Committee)

The National Steering Committee members are expected to establish an International Steering Committee together with the APWF, which conducts regular meetings and makes decisions.

- **Local staff and volunteers**

The host country is also expected to secure sufficient numbers of local staff and volunteers to support the logistic in the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS.

- **Communication and promotion about the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS**

It is expected that the host country will actively introduce and promote the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS from the preparation phase to the end, including the dates of the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS and the outcomes after the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS making use of mass and social media. It is expected that the country is to develop, update, and manage the website about the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS.

- **Mutual understanding of the organization of the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS**

The host country and the APWF Secretariat are expected to make a written agreement establishing overall objectives and principles underlying the planning, financing, and execution of the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS, based on the mutual consensus of the final version of the 5<sup>th</sup> APWS planning paper.

- **Attending an APWF Governing Council meeting**

A representative of the selected host country will be requested to join the APWF Governing Council Meeting (a hybrid meeting in Singapore and online) to introduce its 5<sup>th</sup> APWS plan and the preparation progress at an APWF Governing Council meeting. The APWF Secretariat will inform the meeting date when the representatives of the selected host country are expected to join.

The APWF Governing Council, which currently consists of the Chair, Ms. Changhua Wu, and the Vice Chair, Prof. Eduardo Araral, will guide the formation of the candidate assessment criteria for the APWF Secretariat.

A selection of the host country shall be made by consensus of the APWF Governing Council during the APWF Governing Council Meeting, prior to the public announcement.

- **Contact:**

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