IAEA
International Atomic Energy Agency
Atoms for Peace and Development

Workshop on Water Isotope Innovation and Communication

IAEA Headquarters
Vienna, Austria

22 - 26 February 2027

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Information Sheet

Introduction

During the First Coordination Meeting of the IAEA GloWAL Network, participants highlighted as a major issue that the value of isotope hydrology is not yet communicated to decision-makers and the wider water community as effectively as it could be. This communication gap was identified as a significant barrier to the wider integration of isotope hydrology into government water-management strategies. Although numerous examples demonstrate how isotope tools and approaches can improve understanding of water resources and support more informed management decisions, the resulting scientific evidence is not always translated into clear, compelling and decision-relevant messages for policy makers, water managers and other non-specialist stakeholders. There is therefore a need to strengthen how isotope hydrologists communicate scientific evidence to policy makers and water managers.

The Water Isotope Innovation and Communication Workshop (WisoInC LAB) is proposed as a practical response to this challenge. The in-person, interactive workshop will bridge the gap between demonstrating how isotope hydrology can contribute to water resources management and supporting its uptake and integration into national water resources assessment and management at government level. Working in teams of four, early-career isotope hydrologists will use existing data, reports and publications to develop responses to realistic water-management scenarios. Guided by experts in science, policy and governance, finance and economics, communication, human resources and management, participants will refine not only the technical basis of their scientific proposals but also the institutional, financial and communication pathways needed to put them into practice. Progressive information and coaching will simulate the constraints and decisions encountered throughout a real project lifecycle, helping participants translate sound science into persuasive, implementable solutions with clear societal value.

Objectives

The key goal of the workshop is to strengthen the ability of water scientists working in the nuclear field to be able to effectively communicate with policy makers and water managers to enable greater uptake of isotope hydrology at government level with improved outcomes for sustainable water management. At the end of the workshop, participants will be better equipped to: ·

- Move from research publication-focused outputs towards outcome-oriented projects linked to management decisions and societal benefit.·
- Communicate the value and application of isotope hydrology clearly to policy makers, water managers, communities and funders.·
- Strengthen critical thinking, multidisciplinary collaboration and stakeholder engagement across science, policy, governance, finance, economics, communication and management.·
- Assess the suitability, added value, limitations and uncertainty of isotope techniques and connect findings to realistic decision pathways.·
- Apply practical tools to prepare value propositions, policy briefs, communication strategies, implementation plans and concise pitches.

Expected Outputs

Each team will use a scientific project concept document as the basis for developing a government-focused focussed integrated business case and strategic plan. The resulting business case and strategic plan will demonstrate how isotope hydrology can help address a practical water management problem. The workshop will address one significant water problem that may cover one or multiple elements of pollution, groundwater renewability, recharge and flow pathways, water-supply risks, or cooperation and investment in complex or transboundary systems. The final products that participants need to develop include:·

- A concept note of a scientific case study identifying evidence gaps and isotope suitability, added value, limitations and uncertainty.·
- A decision-context analysis covering relevant management decisions, institutional requirements, barriers and the decision pathway.·
- A stakeholder map, audience-specific messages and communication strategy.·
- A simple feasibility and implementation plan that identifies costs, financing, staffing, partnerships, training required, accountability, resources, risks and timeline.·
- A refined recommendation, policy or decision brief, and final three- to five-minute pitch for judging.

Outputs from this workshop are training products developed during a simulation and do not constitute IAEA policy advice, endorsed national plans or funding commitments.

Target Audience

Participants should be early-career scientists with expertise in isotope hydrology or related nuclear applications in water resources management. Participants are expected to have a strong technical foundation in isotope hydrology but need greater confidence in implementation and communication and would like to understand more about how science can be translated into policy. Participants should be willing to work across disciplines and engage government institutions, water managers, civil society, donors and other end users. Note that the workshop can accommodate a maximum of 40 participants who will be organised into 10 groups of 4.

Working Language(s)

English

Structure

Day 1 – Orientation and framing: Introductions; explanation of the scenario, process and outputs; preliminary team presentations based on country interests and concept notes; and short coaching presentations on policy and governance, finance and economics, communication, human resources and management, and science.

Day 2 – Scientific case and project value: Teams consult with coaches, develop their conceptual model, identify evidence gaps, assess isotope suitability and added value, link the science to management decisions, draft value statements and begin stakeholder mapping. Brief progress presentations receive targeted feedback.

Day 3 – Governance, finance and communication: Teams complete the decision pathway, identify institutional barriers, refine stakeholder mapping and audience-specific messages, begin the policy brief, and define costs, financing, staffing, partnerships, training and accountability.

Day 4 – Feasibility and implementation: World Café consultations support assessment of benefits, preparation of a costed workplan and timeline, and refinement of the recommendation, decision brief and pitch. Core outputs are updated iteratively across Days 2–4.

Day 5 – Presentation and evaluation: Teams deliver three- to five-minute pitches, answer questions and are assessed by the judging panel against agreed criteria, followed by awards.

Participation and Registration

All persons wishing to participate in the event have to be designated by an IAEA Member State or should be members of organizations that have been invited to attend.

In order to be designated by an IAEA Member State or invited organization, participants are requested to submit their application via the InTouch+ platform (https://intouchplus.iaea.org) to the competent national authority (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Permanent Mission to the IAEA or National Atomic Energy Authority) or organization for onward transmission to the IAEA by **13 November 2026**, following the registration procedure in InTouch+:

1. Access the InTouch+ platform (https://intouchplus.iaea.org):
    - Persons with an existing NUCLEUS account can sign in to the platform with their username and password;
    - Persons without an existing NUCLEUS account can register here.

2. Once signed in, prospective participants can use the InTouch+ platform to:
   - Complete or update their personal details under 'Complete Profile' and upload the relevant supporting documents;
   - Search for the relevant event under the 'My Eligible Events' tab;
   - Select the Member State or invited organization they want to represent from the drop-down menu entitled 'Designating Authority' (if an invited organization is not listed, please contact InTouchPlus.Contact-Point@iaea.org);
   - If applicable, indicate whether a paper is being submitted and complete the relevant information;
   - If applicable, indicate whether financial support is requested and complete the relevant information (this is not applicable to participants from invited organizations);
   - Based on the data input, the InTouch+ platform will automatically generate the Participation Form (Form A) and/or the Grant Application Form (Form C);
   - Submit their application.

Once submitted through the InTouch+ platform, the application, together with the auto-generated form(s), will be transmitted automatically to the required authority for approval. If approved, the application, together with the applicable form(s), will automatically be sent to the IAEA through the online platform.

NOTE: The application for financial support should be made, together with the submission of the application, by **13 November 2026**.

For additional information on how to apply for an event, please refer to the InTouch+ Help page. Any other issues or queries related to InTouch+ can be sent to InTouchPlus.Contact-Point@iaea.org.

Selected participants will be informed in due course on the procedures to be followed with regard to administrative and financial matters.

Participants are hereby informed that the personal data they submit will be processed in line with the Agency's Personal Data and Privacy Policy and is collected solely for the purpose(s) of reviewing and assessing the application and to complete logistical arrangements where required. The IAEA may also use the contact details of Applicants to inform them of the IAEA's scientific and technical publications, or the latest employment opportunities and current open vacancies at the IAEA. These secondary purposes are consistent with the IAEA's mandate. Further information can be found in the Data Processing Notice concerning the IAEA InTouch+ platform.

Expenditures and Grants

No registration fee is charged to participants.

The IAEA is generally not in a position to bear the travel and other costs of participants in the event. The IAEA has, however, limited funds at its disposal to help meet the cost of attendance of certain participants. Upon specific request, such assistance may be offered to normally one participant per country, provided that, in the IAEA's view, the participant will make an important contribution to the event.

The application for financial support should be made, together with the submission of the application, by **13 November 2026**.

Venue

The event will be held at the Vienna International Centre (VIC) where the IAEA's Headquarters are located. Participants must make their own travel and accommodation arrangements.

General information on the VIC and other practical details, such as a list of hotels offering a reduced rate for IAEA participants, are listed on the following IAEA web page: https://www.iaea.org/events.

Participants are advised to arrive at Checkpoint 1/Gate 1 of the VIC one hour before the start of the event on the first day in order to allow for timely registration. Participants will need to present an official photo identification document in order to be admitted to the VIC premises.

Visas

Participants who require a visa to enter Austria should submit the necessary application to the nearest diplomatic or consular representative of Austria at least four weeks before they travel to Austria. Since Austria is a Schengen State, persons requiring a visa will have to apply for a Schengen visa. In States where Austria has no diplomatic mission, visas can be obtained from the consular authority of a Schengen Partner State representing Austria in the country in question.

Additional Requirements

Applicants must submit a profile and application through InTouch+ (as described previously) and prepare an initial concept note using the instructions below. This must be sent to IHS.Contact-Point@iaea.org before the workshop deadline of **13 November 2026**. The concept note should be on the following problem statement: Governments face increasing challenges from droughts, floods, shifting seasonality, declining meltwater and changing water availability without sufficient evidence to understand system responses and priority risks. The concept note should address the following three issues and can be based around any country or region.

1. Describe the priority water challenge, where it occurs, who or what is affected, and the critical information currently missing for effective planning or adaptation.
2. Explain how isotope hydrology could help close the evidence gap. Outline the main objective, the key questions to be answered, and the isotope techniques or supporting data that may be appropriate.
3. Describe the expected findings or products, who would use them, and how they would help governments understand changes in the water system, identify where risks are greatest, and plan appropriate resilience or adaptation measures.

The concept note should not exceed 1 A4 page, 10pt Arial font with single line spacing. Concept notes will be used to assist with participant selection. The concept notes of selected participants will underpin the selected participant's initial presentation and subsequent teamwork that will be developed around the common scenario.

The subject of the email must be **WisoInC-Concept Note-[Last Name]** and must be received by **13 November 2026**.

Organization

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Subsequent correspondence on scientific matters should be sent to the Scientific Secretary/Secretaries and correspondence on other matters related to the event to the Administrative Secretary.