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World Day for Glaciers & World Water Day 2025 Celebration

20 & 21 March 2025

Towards the Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences





Joint Celebration of the first World Day for Glaciers and of World Water Day 2025



This joint celebration of the first World Day for Glaciers and of World Water Day 2025 highlights the interconnected challenges of water security and climate change, and platforms dialogue and action regarding the state of the world’s glaciers and the impacts of the melting cryosphere on global water, food and energy security. The UN General Assembly declared 2025 as the International Year of Glaciers’ Preservation (IYGP 2025) and 21 March of each year as the World Day for Glaciers, starting this year. The UN-Water Members and Partners alligned the theme of World Water Day on 22 March as “Glaciers’ preservation”. In conjunction with the release of the 2025 World Water Development Report ‘Mountains and glaciers: Water towers’ on World Water Day¹, the event will provide critical insights into the role glaciers play as the “water

towers” of the world, offering a scientific basis for stronger international water management policies and climate adaptation strategies.

Glaciers and ice sheets, holding 70% of the world’s freshwater, are melting at unprecedented rates due to rising temperatures. The State of Global Water Resources 2023 (WMO)² reports the largest mass loss in 50 years, with some regions experiencing double the predicted decline. While this temporarily increases downstream water, the long-term loss threatens water supplies for billions, disrupts ecosystems, raises sea levels, and destabilizes agriculture and industry. UNESCO studies further confirm that a third of glaciers in World Heritage sites are set to disappear by 2050³. Snowmelt and thawing permafrost, critical for water supplies, vary globally due to topography and climate. Limited data and complex glacier-climate interactions hinder accurate predictions, delaying policy responses. The World Day for Glaciers and IYGP 2025 contribute to addressing this crisis by promoting solutions, drawing on international cooperation, robust data sharing frameworks, and cutting-edge scientific tools to improve prediction models and inform adaptive water management strategies.

The IYGP 2025 is designed to serve as a launchpad for the Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences (2025-2034) adopted by the UN General Assembly through Resolution A/RES/78/321. This decade-long initiative calls for intensified global collaboration to enhance scientific understanding of cryospheric changes—glaciers, sea ice, permafrost, and snow cover—and their far-reaching impacts on the planet. It will lay the groundwork by fostering global cooperation on research, monitoring, and data-sharing to better predict the consequences of cryospheric changes on water resources, sea levels, and ecosystems. The UN General Assembly encourages all stakeholders to observe the Decade of Action by raising awareness of the importance of glaciers, snow, and ice, and sharing best practices and knowledge on their impacts and related resilience efforts.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.un-glaciers.org/en>

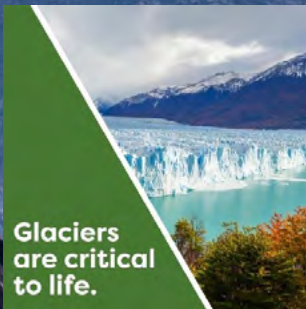
1 <https://www.unesco.org/en/wwap>

2 <https://library.wmo.int/idurl/4/69033>

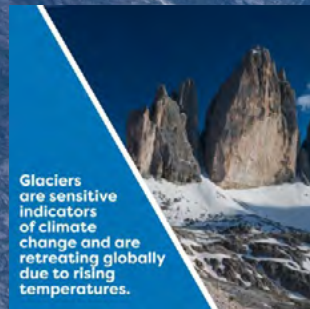
3 <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000383551>

Key Messages

Glaciers are retreating at unprecedented rates, reshaping landscapes and the world as we know it. The United Nations agencies in charge of the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation have drawn up a dozen key messages, highlighting the importance of glaciers worldwide.



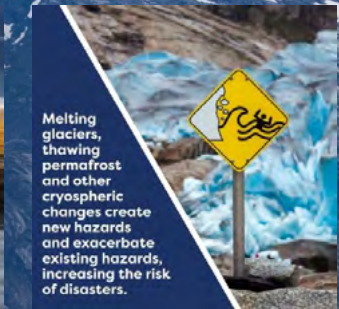
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AGENDA for the 20th

Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences 2025-2034

Brainstorming Session

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris
Room II – 20 March, 2025

Brainstorming – Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences	
8:30 – 9:00	Registration and Welcome Coffee
9:00 – 9:30	<p style="text-align: center;">Opening Session</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Moderator – Mr Abou Amani, Director, UNESCO Water Sciences</i></p> <p>Opening Remarks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Lidia Brito, Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences, UNESCO • H.E. Olivier Poivre d'Arvor, Ambassador for the Poles and Maritime Issues, Special Envoy of the French President for UNOC3 • Mr Bruno Carrasco, Director General, Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department, Asian Development Bank (ADB) <p>Presentation of the objectives: Mr Anil Mishra, Chief of Section, UNESCO</p> <p>Rapporteurs: Ms Annelies Mertens (UNESCO), Ms Sohyun Cho (UNESCO)</p>
9:30 – 10:30	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 1 – Scientific research: Cryosphere observation and modelling</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Moderator - Mr Keith Alverson, Executive Director, CliC International Project Office</i></p> <p>Presentation: Mr John Pomeroy, UNESCO Chair in Mountain Water Sustainability</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Michael Zemp, Director, World Glacier Monitoring Service (WGMS), University of Zurich • Ms Rodica Nitu, Chief, Global Cryosphere Watch, World Meteorological Organization (WMO) • Mr Farooq Azam, Senior Cryosphere Specialist, ICIMOD (International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development) • Mr Yao Tandong, Professor, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Institute of Tibetan Plateau Research • Mr Jérôme Fort, Director of Research, French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) <p>Rapporteurs: Ms Ruth Nguma (UNESCO), Ms Siying Tan (UNESCO)</p>
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break

<p>11:00 – 12:00</p>	<p>Session 2 – Socio-economic impact, vulnerability and adaptation <i>Moderator – Mr Anil Mishra (UNESCO) and Ms Johanna Grabow (SCAR)</i></p> <p>Presentation: Ms Johanna Grabow, Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Carolina Adler, Executive Director, Mountain Research Initiative (MRI) • Ms Mine Islar, Senior, Lecturer, Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies (LUCSUS), Sweden • Mr Graham McDowell, Director of Science and Knowledge, Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative (Y2Y) • Ms Miriam Jackson, Eurasia and Nordic Director, International Cryosphere Climate Initiative (ICCI) • Ms Alexandra Lavrillier, Associate Professor, University of Versailles-Saint-Quentin <p>Rapporteurs: Mr Alexandre Germouty (UNESCO), Ms Marthe Cressato (UNESCO)</p>
<p>12:00 – 13:00</p>	<p>Session 3 – Education and Capacity Building <i>Moderator – Mr Koen Verbist, Programme Specialist, UNESCO Water Sciences</i></p> <p>Presentation: Ms Neera Shrestha Pradhan, Senior Programme Coordinator, ICIMOD</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Isabelle Gärtner, Co-President, International Permafrost Association (IPA) • Mr James McPhee, Professor, University of Chile • Mr Ji Woong Yang, Assistant Professor, International Association of Cryospheric Sciences (IACS) / University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines (UVSQ) • Mr David Drewry, Vice-Chair and Director for Natural Sciences, UK National Commission for UNESCO • Ms Won Jung Byun, Programme Specialist, UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development <p>Rapporteurs: Mr Jorgen Van Der Biest (UNESCO), Ms Yuqing Luo (UNESCO)</p>
<p>13:00 – 14:00</p>	<p>Lunch break</p>
<p>14:00 – 15:00</p>	<p>Session 4 – Policy, Advocacy and Campaign <i>Moderator – Ms Heidi Sevestre, Glaciologist, Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme</i></p> <p>Presentation: Ms Miriam Jackson and Mr James Kirkham, International Cryosphere Climate Initiative</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Mr Julio Cordano, Ambassador and Director of the Environment, Climate Change and Oceans, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile • Ms Izabella Koziell, Deputy Director-General, ICIMOD • Ms Oriana Romano, Head of Unit Water Governance, OECD • Mr Børge Ousland, Explorer, Ousland Explorers • Mr Miguel Angel Ojeda, Executive Committee, European Polar Board <p>Rapporteurs: Mr Alexandre Germouty (UNESCO), Ms Adèle Javal (UNESCO)</p>

<p>15:00 – 16:10</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 5 – Finance</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Moderator – Mr Bapon Fakhruddin, Lead Climate & Hydrology Specialist, Green Climate Fund (GCF)</i></p> <p>Presentation: Mr Bruno Carrasco, Director General, Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department, Asian Development Bank</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Johanna Durand, Philanthropy Manager, Ice Memory Foundation • Mr Hao Xu, Vice-President, Tencent • Ms Salomé Mormentyn, Coordinator of the Polar Initiative of Fondation Prince Albert II de Monaco • Mr Tshewang Dorji, Senior Climate Change Specialist, Global Environment Facility (GEF) - Online • Ms Yaël Hirsch, Project Officer, Albédo Foundation for the Cryosphere • (TBC) Ms Constance Chalchat, Chief Sustainability Officer for Corporate & Investment Banking and Global Markets, BNP Paribas <p>Rapporteurs: Ms Tatiana Dmitrieva (UNESCO), Ms Adèle Javal (UNESCO)</p>
<p>16:10 – 16:30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Coffee break</p>
<p>16:30 – 18:00</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Parallel side-events related to the International Year of Glaciers’ Preservation 2025</p>
<p>18:00 – 20:00</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Upon invitation only</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Why Melting Glaciers Affect Us All”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Followed by a Reception hosted by the Permanent Delegation of Switzerland</p> <p style="text-align: center;">UNESCO Restaurant 7th Floor</p>



SIDE EVENTS

Side events from 16:30-18:00

Room II Chronicles of Cryospheric Loss: Weaving Science, Art, and Voices from the Ice

This session portrays climate change, deglaciation, cryospheric decline and the impacts on societies, water resources and ecosystems using art, science, cartography and cultural understanding. Topics cover the fusion of art and science to help society understand, feel and address rapid environmental change, and emotion-driven pathways of deglaciation including how feelings of loss, concern, care, hope and acceptance shape different climate action responses. This session will put the spotlight on recent popular UNESCO- and other books, exhibitions and testimonies of the frozen world.

Room VI Europe's Southernmost Glaciers in the Pyrenean Climate Change Observatory (OPCC): cross-border cooperation to ensure adaptation mainstreaming into the political agenda of a mountain territory

The Pyrenean mountain range hosts Europe's southernmost glaciers, making it an early indicator of European cryosphere responses to climate change. This side event highlights cross-border cooperation for scientific monitoring, providing publicly accessible data on glacier evolution and multilevel climate governance, financing transboundary actions, and innovative monitoring networks across the cryosphere, hydrosphere, and atmosphere. It emphasizes the cryosphere and hydrosphere's central role in Pyrenean socio-economic and biophysical systems, linking scientific advances with policy decisions. A new online photo library showcasing decades of glacier observations will be introduced, sparking discussion on optimizing public data-sharing platforms.

Room VIII A vanishing mountain cryosphere and its importance to the water cycle under climate change

This session will explore the impacts of climate change on mountain glaciers and their role in sustaining water resources, particularly in regions facing prolonged droughts. Experts will present research on the Andean water cycle, the MODSNOW cryosphere monitoring system in Central and South Asia, and the challenges posed by increasing precipitation deficits. The event will conclude with a panel discussion on the future of mountain water systems and the need for a paradigm shift in glacier research and policy.

Cinema of UNESCO: Streaming of the DOWNSTREAM documentary: Explore the impact of glacier loss on our planet and discover what we can do to make a difference

Produced by the NGO Protect Our Winters, in collaboration with Icebreaker, a pioneer in sustainable outdoor clothing, *DOWNSTREAM* highlights the crucial link between events in the mountains and their downstream impact on communities. The documentary demonstrates how progressive brands, scientists, creatives, athletes, and NGOs can collaborate to address urgent issues such as glacier loss and climate change.



2025
International
Year of Glaciers'
Preservation



AGENDA for the 21th

International Year of Glaciers' Preservation

World Day for Glaciers & World Water Day 2025 Celebration

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris
Room II – 21 March, 2025

World Day for Glaciers & World Water Day 2025	
8:30 – 9:00	Registration and Welcome Coffee
9:45 – 10:00	<p>Opening Cultural Performance <i>Mountains and Climate Change</i> From Tom Sochas Trio</p>
10:00 – 10:40	<p>High-Level Opening Ceremony <i>Master of Ceremony – Ms Lidia Brito, Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences, UNESCO</i></p> <p>Launch of the World Day for Glaciers and World Water Day By Ms Audrey Azoulay, Director General of UNESCO</p> <p>Video teaser of the UN WWDR 2025 <i>Mountains and Glaciers: Water Towers</i></p> <p>Ministerial Remarks <i>Master of Ceremony – Ms Anupama Madhok Sud - Science Journalist</i></p> <p>Opening Address: by Ms Celeste Saulo, Secretary General of WMO (Online)</p> <p>Special Guest Speaker:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Saidzoda Rahim Hamro, Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan • Ms Agnès Pannier-Runacher, Minister for ecological transition, France • Mr Antonio Tajani, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Italy (TBC) <p>Photo session with the Dignitaries</p>
10:40 – 10:45	<p>Video from WWAP <i>Walk of Water 2025 - [Water Towers]</i></p>

<p>10:45 – 11:50</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Towards the Decade of Action on Cryospheric Sciences (2025-2034) Ministerial and High-level Roundtable</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Moderator – Ms Lidia Brito, Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences, UNESCO</i></p> <p>Keynote presentation: <i>The Impact of Melting Glaciers</i> by Mr John Pomeroy, Director, Centre for Hydrology of the University of Saskatchewan and Ms Carolina Adler – Executive Director of the Mountain Research Initiative (Chairs of the IYGP2025) (10 minutes)</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Dinara Kemelova, Special Representative for the implementation of the Five Year of Action for Development of Mountain Regions, of the Kyrgyz Republic • Mr Danilo Núñez Izquierdo, Vice Minister of Public Works of the Republic of Chile • Mr Vidar Helgesen, Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC/UNESCO) and Assistant Director-General of UNESCO • Ms Izabella Koziell, Deputy Director General, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development • Mr Bapon Fakhruddin, Lead Climate & Hydrology Specialist, Green Climate Fund (GCF) <p>Rapporteurs: Mr Jacob Diamond (UNESCO), Ms Adèle Javal (UNESCO)</p>
<p>11:50 – 12:55</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">World Water and Glacier Day High-Level Roundtable</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Moderator – Mr Anil Mishra, Chief of the Hydrological Systems, Climate Change and Adaptation Section, UNESCO Water Sciences</i></p> <p>Keynote presentation: <i>Mountains and Glaciers - Water Towers</i>, Mr Miguel Doria, Coordinator of the UNESCO World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) (10 minutes)</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Helmut Habersack, Chairperson of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP) • Ms Heidi Sevestre, Glaciologist, Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme • Mr Lazare Eloundou Assomo, Director of UNESCO World Heritage • Mr Antonio Abreu, Director of UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme • Ms Lucija Plantak, Head of the Scientific Committee of the UNESCO Groundwater Youth Network <p>Rapporteurs: Ms Sohyun Cho (UNESCO), Ms Esra Siltu (UNESCO)</p>

12:55 – 13:00	<p align="center">Closing Remarks Mr Abou Amani, Secretary of UNESCO Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP)</p>
13:00 – 13:05	<p align="center">Closing video <i>“Glacier Lamentation – The Sound of Climate Change”</i>, Norwegian Academy of Music (NMH) and University Centre in Svalbard</p>
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 – 15:30	<p align="center">Parallel side-events related to the International Year of Glaciers’ Preservation 2025</p>
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 – 17:30	<p align="center">Parallel side-events related to the International Year of Glaciers’ Preservation 2025</p>
18:00 – 20:00	<p align="center">Upon invitation only “Why Melting Glaciers Affect Us All” Followed by a Reception hosted by the Permanent Delegation of Switzerland UNESCO Restaurant 7th Floor</p>



SIDE EVENTS

Side events from 14:00-15:30

Room VI_ Black Carbon and Melting Glaciers: A Global Wake-Up Call - Regional and global impacts of black carbon emissions on glaciers and cryosphere regions

This session will highlight the urgent need to reduce black carbon emissions to slow glacier melt and safeguard water resources. Experts will examine regional impacts and mitigation strategies across Kilimanjaro, the Central Andes, the Antarctic Peninsula, the Arctic, and the Himalayas. The event will also feature the launch of the Clean Air Fund report, *Fast Action on Black Carbon: A win-win for climate, clean air, and health*, providing key insights and actionable solutions for emissions reduction.

Room VII_ Climate Change Impact on Cryosphere, from Glaciers to the Sea: examples from the regions

This side event will explore the vital role of mountains and glaciers in building resilience across basins, from source to sea. It will address both short-term impacts, like Glacial Lake Outburst Floods, and long-term challenges, such as water security. The session will emphasize the importance of regional and transboundary cooperation, data monitoring, and understanding glacier dynamics for sustainable basin management. Insights from ongoing projects in Central Asia, Africa, and Latin America will foster collaboration, knowledge exchange, and adaptive capacity in response to climate change.

Room XI_ Mountain Voices: Science, Stories and Solutions

Mountain communities are increasingly vulnerable to glacier melt, shifting snowfall, and permafrost thaw, which threaten water availability, livelihoods, and infrastructure. This session will present scientific insights on glacier preservation and share firsthand accounts from affected communities worldwide. Experts and local voices will discuss the cascading impacts of cryosphere changes and explore actionable pathways to strengthen resilience and safeguard water, food, and energy security.

Room IX_ Melting Glaciers, Lasting Impacts: Addressing Societal and Environmental Challenges, Solutions and Actions with a Changing Mountain Cryosphere

This session will examine the impact of climate change on high mountain environments, focusing on shifting glacier, snow, and permafrost regimes and their consequences for water resources, ecosystems, and livelihoods. Experts from the UNESCO Chair in Mountain Water Sustainability and the Glacier Stewardship Program will present transdisciplinary approaches, including Indigenous knowledge and technological solutions, to enhance adaptation and mitigation efforts. The event will feature short presentations, a panel discussion, and audience engagement to explore pathways for sustainable mountain water management.

UNESCO Cinema: Ice Memory, an international initiative to preserve the glaciers memory for future generations

The Ice Memory Initiative aims to collect and safeguard ice cores from endangered glaciers, creating an Antarctic sanctuary to preserve the planet's climate and environmental history. This roundtable will bring together leading scientists, Ice Memory Foundation representatives, and philanthropists to discuss the scientific, logistical, legal, and geopolitical challenges of this race against time. The session will also provide insights into past drilling expeditions and the collective efforts required to secure this invaluable heritage for future generations.

Room IX_ Can YOUth save a melting generation?

This dynamic youth-led session will bring together young changemakers, scientists, professionals, and policymakers to tackle the pressing challenge of glacier loss and its impact on water security. By bridging generations and disciplines, the event will explore innovative, data-driven solutions through scientific research, governance frameworks, and global networks. With youth at the forefront of decision-making, this interactive discussion will highlight strategies to protect water resources and build climate resilience. Join us in shaping a sustainable future—your ideas and actions matter!

Room XI_ Glaciers and Loss and Damage in the Third Pole Environment

The Third Pole holds the largest ice volume outside the polar regions, feeding major Asian rivers and sustaining ecosystems, biodiversity, and water security for millions. However, rapid glacier melt, increasing hazards like glacial lake outburst floods, and rising uncertainties in water availability pose critical challenges. This session will explore the latest scientific insights, knowledge gaps, and innovative technologies needed to better understand and mitigate these risks. Bringing together researchers, policymakers, and stakeholders, the discussion will highlight the urgent need for international cooperation to safeguard the region's cryosphere and freshwater resources.

Room VII_ Academic Water Diplomacy in Glacier Landscape

This side-event will explore the intersection of science, policy, and education in glacier preservation. Building on the «Academic Water Diplomacy» event at the 26th IHP Session in June 2024, it will focus on water security challenges in Arctic regions. With a multidisciplinary approach, experts will discuss climate change, sea-level rise, and Italy's Arctic Council strategy, promoting international collaboration for sustainable water diplomacy.

Room VI_ The world's changing cryosphere: Advances and future challenges in data, information, and knowledge-building

This side event will reflect the vision and efforts to be carried out by the research and monitoring community during the IYGP and the Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences. Speakers will explore some of the efforts being made globally to improve our understanding of hydrological, glaciological, and climatological processes across the Earth's cryosphere, including in ground observations, remote sensing, and international collaborations and data sharing. This event will feature five presentations followed by a distinguished panel, and will include time for audience questions.

UNESCO Cinema: Heidi's Ice / The Ice Builders

This event presents two thought-provoking documentaries exploring human connections to melting glaciers. *Heidi's Ice – Letter to the Glacier* (France, 2023) follows a French glaciologist's personal tribute to Arctic glaciers, while *The Ice Builders* (Italy, 2024) showcases Ladakhi villagers reviving ancestral techniques to slow ice melt. Each screening will be followed by a Q&A with the directors and glaciologist Heïdi Sevestre, inviting reflection on resilience, adaptation, and what the Global South can teach us about preparing for environmental change.

Exhibition

For the celebrations of the first World Day for Glaciers and the World Water Day 2026, exhibitions will be held at the UNESCO Headquarters. Inside, in Hall Pas Perdus and Hall Ségur, a two-day exhibition will showcase the works of:

- Glaciers on the Edge: Preserving a Global Heritage - Interactive exhibition on glaciers in UNESCO Designated Sites by GRID-Arendal
- The Great Thaw – Gennadiy Ivanov, John Pomeroy & Trevor Davies
- Crying Glacier – Ludwig Berger
- Elegy For A Glacier – Sarah Bachinger
- Ice Postcards Project – Alfredo Pourailly De La Plaza & Cristian Donoso Christie
- Earth’s Memory – Fabiano Ventura, Associazione Macromicro
- Melting Giants – Tobias Buettel
- Abstract Landscapes – Jürgen Merz
- Iceberg Care – Adam Sébire
- Global Glacier Casualty List – Rice University

Outside, on the outer fences, two expositions are displayed. “Glaciers in Focus – Guardians of Earth’s Climate Heritage” takes you on a visual journey through Earth’s frozen treasures. “Walk of Water – Water Towers” showcases the magic of the cryosphere and highlights solutions and impacts around melting glaciers and water storage globally.



Live update of the agenda

The agenda in this brochure reflects the version as of 19/03/2025. Some updates may have occurred since. Please refer to the online version of the agenda, which is updated as soon as our team is informed of any changes.

Remote Side-Events

All over the world various partners are celebrating the first World Day for Glaciers. From the 10th until the 25th of March events will be organized at over 15 locations worldwide. Find out more by scanning the QR code.



Online Side-Events

On March 21st, various partners will be hosting online and/or hybrid events throughout the day. In total over 20 events will take place in different time zones. Discover more by scanning the QR code.





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Educational, Scientific
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**Link to the live updated agenda of
World Day for Glaciers &
World Water Day 2025 Celebration**



**INTERGOVERNMENTAL HYDROLOGICAL PROGRAMME (IHP)
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