Theme #1 "Building Climate-Resilient water systems for the future"

Central idea: Future-proofing water systems to thrive in a climate-uncertain world—through innovation, inclusion, and investment.

Framing: To build climate resilient water systems that adapt and endure in future, we must reimagine water governance through innovation, local empowerment, strategic finance, agile knowledge systems and bold policy reforms.

Topics:

- **Knowledge and innovation**: Leveraging technologies such as AI, remote sensing and traditional knowledge to build responsive water systems
- **Strategic partnerships for action**: shift from reactive and fragmented to systemic and holistic approach, with partnerships across sectors integrating diverse expertise
- **Community empowerment**: Co-creating strategies with local communities through education and capacity building, equity.
- **Mobilizing innovative financing**: Mobilize climate-aligned funding across public, private, and global channels to support transformative change—from large-scale infrastructure to grassroots initiatives, ensuring that investment is distributed equitably and effectively.
- **Planning for climate uncertainty:** Integrate climate risk into water policy, design, and investment— ensuring that systems are flexible and prepared and prepared to withstand future shocks.

Theme # 2 The importance of the Water-Food-Climate Nexus: Water scarcity is a growing problem in many parts of the world. Billions of people still lack basic services such as access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene. Globally, agriculture alone consumes over 70% of freshwater resources, making food production highly dependent on water availability. Water shortages directly contribute to food insecurity, while climate change exacerbates these challenges by intensifying droughts, increasing extreme flooding, and disrupting agricultural productivity. The impacts of climate change are often felt through water, further threatening global food systems. Water quality is compromised by food-related pollution, which in turn negatively impacts food safety. Sustainable farming practices - such as water-efficient irrigation, and climate-smart agriculture - can reduce water consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, affecting positively climate change and contributing to sustainable water management. Additionally, water-resilient food systems strengthen economic stability and reduce social vulnerabilities, particularly for marginalized communities.

Current Challenges: Despite the clear interdependencies between water, food, and climate, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) often fail to fully integrate this nexus, resulting in fragmented policies and missed opportunities for synergistic solutions. Without integrated approaches, efforts to address one system may inadvertently undermine another. Therefore, achieving accessible, sustainable, and well-managed water and sanitation systems requires cross-sectoral strategies that balance these interdependencies and foster resilience.

Relevance of the nexus for the SDGs: In recognition of these challenges, the COP28 Presidency launched the Water-Resilient Food Systems Partnership during COP28 in Dubai. This two-year initiative, hosted by the UNFCCC's Climate-Resilient Food Systems (CRFS) Alliance, aims to strengthen the resilience of food systems by addressing the complex interdependencies between water, agriculture, and climate change. The interconnected relationship of food production, water and climate change lies at the heart of the partnership and is seen as key to achieve multiple SDGs, with SDG 6 "Clean Water and Sanitation" at its core. Additionally, by ensuring food security through sustainable water and agricultural practices, the nexus contributes to the SDG 2 "Zero Hunger". A holistic approach encourages sustainable resource management and reduces food and water waste, directly affecting responsible consumption and production (SDG 12). Moreover SDG 13 "Climate Action" is central, as adaptation and mitigation strategies are included into united water and food systems.