

STRUCTURING THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Water4All SRIA update process

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACRONYM	FULL TITLE
AI	Artificial Intelligence
EU	European Union
IoT	Internet of Things
JPI	Joint Programming Initiative
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
UN	United Nations
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRIA	Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda
Water4All	European Partnership on Water Security for the Planet

ABSTRACT

The Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) of the Water4All Partnership will be updated in 2025. As part of the update process a public consultation on the topics of the Water4All SRIA will be launched by May 2024 through the Water4All's website. The primary objective of the public consultation is to gather perspectives from stakeholders on the scientific scope of Water4All. In pursuit of this objective, there will be some open box questions related to the objectives of SRIA, global challenges, and barriers. All Water4All partners are encouraged to advertise the public consultation in their countries for the relevant target groups. This deliverable report serves as a guiding document for the public consultation outlining information on the key questions to be asked in the public consultation, potential target groups of respondents, expected outcomes and a process plan.

STRUCTURING THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Introduction

This report serves as a guiding document for the public consultation that will be launched by May 2024. As outlined in the Grant Agreement, it will “**provide information on the key questions to be asked, target groups of respondents and expected outcomes**”.

The public consultation will adhere to the following guiding principles: openness, information accessibility, accountability, transparency, visibility, and inclusivity. These principles are designed to uphold the appreciation of stakeholders' input, ensure the accessibility of information, and foster an inclusive and accountable process for all involved parties. The survey will be anonymous and only relevant background information will be asked from the respondents. The survey will follow the Privacy Policy of Water4All (<https://www.water4all-partnership.eu/privacy-policy>). The consultation will be a mix of open and closed questions.

Background information on the programme and the SRIA

The [Water4All Partnership](#) – Water Security for the Planet – co-funded by the European Union within the frame of the [Horizon Europe programme](#), aims at enabling water security for all in the long term through boosting systemic transformations and changes across the entire research – water innovation pipeline, fostering the matchmaking between problem owners and solution providers. Water4All adopts a **systemic approach from source to sea** by addressing freshwater security challenges inland areas drained by river basins, connected aquifers and downstream recipients including deltas and estuaries, coastlines and near-shore waters, adjacent seas, and the open ocean. The Partnership duration is for seven years from June 2022. The objectives are to tackle water challenges as means to face climate change, help to achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) and boost the EU's competitiveness and growth.

The Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) of the Water4All Partnership delineates water-related subjects for which research and innovation endeavors are recommended to ensure universal access to water. These subjects are categorized into distinct key themes encompassing the value of water and circular economy, ecosystems and biodiversity, sustainable water management, water and health, infrastructures, governance, and international cooperation. Regarded as the "backbone" of the Water4All Partnership, the SRIA establishes the strategic directives of the program. Consequently, it will serve as a guiding framework for partners in formulating annual work plans and conducting analyses of thematic synergies with other European and international water initiatives.

Overview of the SRIA development and update process

The Water4All Partnership released its [Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda \(SRIA\): 2020-2025](#) on the 30th September 2022. The release of the SRIA took place after more than two years of work in which partners have analysed strategic agendas of other water initiatives (e.g., Water Joint Programming Initiative – Water JPI - and other JPis, PRIMA, EurAqua network, Water Europe), and have followed a consultative approach for the collection of stakeholders' views on water challenges and knowledge needs (Figure 1). A first consultation of the Water JPI's Advisory Boards took place at the end of 2020. This was followed by a public consultation (December 2020 – January 2021), and a new consultation to the Advisory Boards and partners representatives in the Water4All Partnership in the first quarter of 2021. The public consultation provided more than 90

responses from 19 European countries, India, Norway, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States. The process was completed by targeted interviews to representatives from international organisations, water authorities, technology platforms, non-governmental organisations, funding institutions and networks of research and innovation operators.

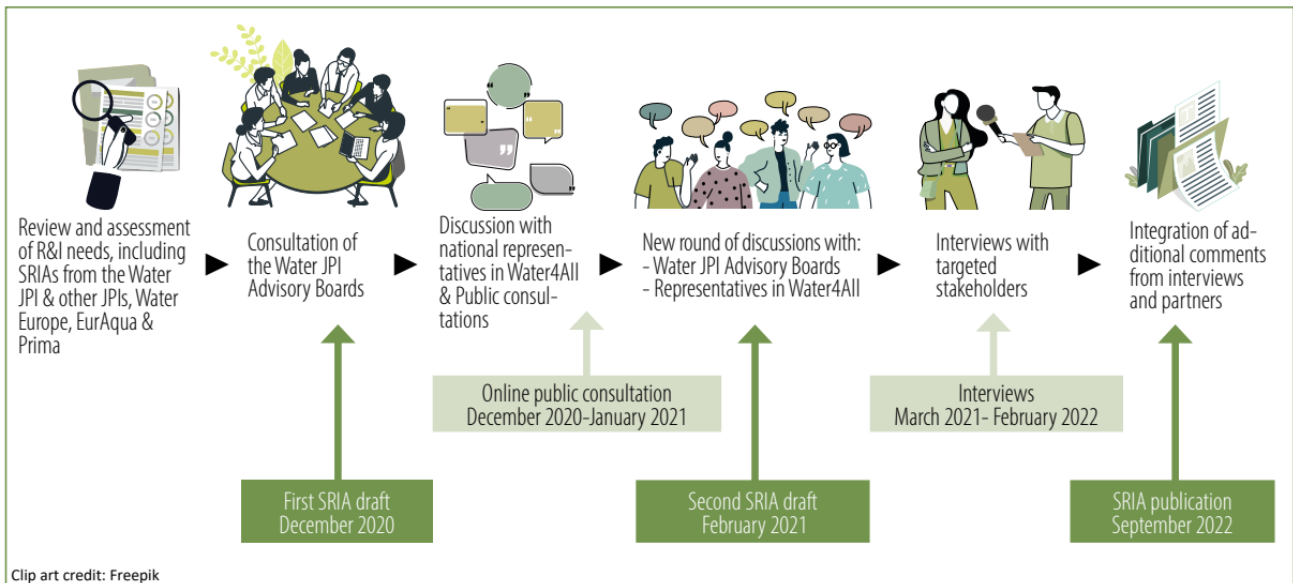


Figure 1. Water4All SRIA development process.

The next, updated version of the SRIA is due at the end of 2025. This revision process is carried out as part of Water4All Pillar A activities and is organised into four different Tasks. Task A.1 carries out an analysis of the strategic documents of partner initiatives and relevant scientific papers. Task A.2 conducts a foresight exercise. Task A.3 involves the organisation of consultative activities. Water4All partners organised a first stakeholder consultative workshop in February 2023 in Helsinki, Finland, where the aim was to get ideas and recommendations from selected experts on the contents of the SRIA. Moreover, the second consultative workshop, out of the two, will be organised in June 2024, as well as consultations with the Water4All Advisory Boards. In addition, as part of Task A.4, a **new public consultation** will be launched by May 2024 through the Water4All's website. All Water4All partners are encouraged to advertise the public consultation in their countries for the relevant target groups. **In this deliverable we outline information on the key questions to be asked in the public consultation, potential target groups of respondents and expected outcomes.**

Key questions to be asked

The primary objective of the public consultation is to gather perspectives from stakeholders with the specific intent of revising the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA). To achieve this objective, respondents will be requested to assess the significance of the themes delineated in the current SRIA, considering environmental, socioeconomic, and political perspectives, as well as to gauge the urgency of these themes within a time frame of 1 to 3 years. **Significance** refers to the extent to which research and innovation in a particular theme could contribute to responding to socioeconomic, environmental or political needs whereas **urgency** refers to the timescale in which an action should be taken.

In addition, there will be some open box questions related to the objectives of SRIA, global challenges, and barriers. The consultation will also give an interesting opportunity to reflect results gathered with a similar survey by the Water JPI. The Water JPI's consultation, carried out between December 2018 and February 2019, sought to identify pivotal trends and recommendations in research and innovation related to water, providing essential insights for the revision of Water JPI's SRIA. Despite the recent nature of the survey, it is imperative

to acknowledge that the global landscape has undergone significant transformations in the past few years, marked notably by the repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic and geopolitical events such as Russia's actions in Ukraine.

Proposed key questions to be asked in the public consultation survey:

1. In your opinion, what are the key water challenges that should be addressed by Water4All in the next 10 years (i.e. by 2035)? You may consider both environmental and/or socio-economic challenges. (*open question*)
2. Rank the following global water challenges listed/identified in the [UN Water SDG6 Synthesis Report](#) (1 is most **important** and 5 is least important):
 - Functioning of the sanitation cycle.
 - Freshwater (including groundwater) resources in terms of their quality, quantity, development, management, monitoring and use.
 - Disaster risk reduction.
 - Climate-related water challenges.
3. Identify what you think are the barriers to achieving solutions to Global Water Challenges (*multiple choice*):
 - Lack of research funding and/or access to Research Infrastructures
 - Insufficient multi-disciplinary and cross-sectoral collaboration
 - Cost of building research capacity & capability (e.g., recruiting researchers, research, demonstration sites)
 - Lack of disseminating research results to the end users
 - Lack of training on tools tailored for end users to address water challenges
 - Lack of awareness by decision and/or policy makers
 - Limited engagement with industry/economic sector partners
 - Limited engagement with end users and other stakeholders
 - Don't know
 - Other, please specify (*free text*)
4. In your opinion, what concrete solutions are needed to achieve the Water4All aim, enabling water security for all in the long term? (*open question*)
5. The current SRIA states the following: *"The Partnership emphasises the Innovation part and the implementation of solutions, as many have already been developed by scientists, but their uptake by policy makers, end-users and the society is often too limited or too slow to deliver on water challenges at a sufficient pace."* In your opinion, what is needed to enhance the uptake of scientific knowledge into practice? (*open question*)
6. Rank the themes and subthemes identified in Water4All SRIA (1 is most **significant** and 5 is least significant):
 - Theme 1: Water for circular economy: smart water value
 - 1.1. Water supplies for socio-economic development and activities, such as agricultural, aquaculture, urban, industrial and energy uses
 - 1.2. Circular economy
 - 1.3. Empowering the public, water users and stakeholders in valuing water
 - Theme 2: Water for ecosystems and biodiversity
 - 2.1. Functioning and biodiversity
 - 2.2. Resilience, mitigation and adaptation of aquatic ecosystems and ecosystem services to global changes e.g. climate change

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- 2.3. Developing and applying ecological engineering and ecohydrology for ecosystems restoration
 - 2.4. Integrating ecosystem services into the management of water resources and aquatic ecosystems
 - Theme 3: Water for the future: sustainable water management
 - 3.1. Integrated water resources management
 - 3.2. River basin management
 - 3.3. Groundwater management
 - 3.4. Resilience, adaptation and mitigation to hydroclimatic extreme events
 - 3.5. Tools for water management
 - Theme 4: Water and health
 - 4.1. Behaviour and effects of contaminants of emerging concern, litter, plastics, endocrine disruptors
 - 4.2. Water dimension of anti-microbial resistance
 - 4.3. Innovative water tools and technologies for water quality monitoring and water treatment, remediation and disinfection
 - 4.4. Risk assessment and threshold values for protection of human health and ecosystems
 - Theme 5: Water infrastructure
 - 5.1. Adaptation of existing water infrastructures to new challenges
 - 5.2. Water infrastructures resilience
 - 5.3. Water infrastructures security (including cyber and terrorism security)
 - Theme 6: International cooperation
 - 6.1. Water diplomacy
 - 6.2. Establishing tools for trans-boundary cooperation
 - 6.3. Developing integrated, fair and adaptive water resource management systems
 - Theme 7: Governance
 - 7.1. Developing methods for more efficient citizen and wider stakeholder engagement
 - 7.2. Strengthening policy integration, alignment, coherence and water policy coordination to exert a change in society
 - 7.3. Supporting the adoption of innovations
7. Rank the themes identified in Water4All SRIA (1 is most **urgent** and 5 is least urgent):
- Theme 1: Water for circular economy: smart water value
 - 1.1. Water supplies for socio-economic development and activities, such as agricultural, aquaculture, urban, industrial and energy uses
 - 1.2. Circular economy
 - 1.3. Empowering the public, water users and stakeholders in valuing water
 - Theme 2: Water for ecosystems and biodiversity
 - 2.1. Functioning and biodiversity
 - 2.2. Resilience, mitigation and adaptation of aquatic ecosystems and ecosystem services to global changes e.g. climate change
 - 2.3. Developing and applying ecological engineering and ecohydrology for ecosystems restoration
 - 2.4. Integrating ecosystem services into the management of water resources and aquatic ecosystems
 - Theme 3: Water for the future: sustainable water management
 - 3.1. Integrated water resources management

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- 3.2. River basin management
 - 3.3. Groundwater management
 - 3.4. Resilience, adaptation and mitigation to hydroclimatic extreme events
 - 3.5. Tools for water management
 - Theme 4: Water and health
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 - 7.2. Strengthening policy integration, alignment, coherence and water policy coordination to exert a change in society
 - 7.3. Supporting the adoption of innovations
- 8.** Are there any missing themes? (*open question*)
- 9.** Water4All SRIA has identified the following six drivers, i.e., the overarching factors that may lead to changes in the strategic priorities. Rank the drivers according to their importance (1 is most important and 5 is least important)
- Climate change
 - Human and ecosystem health
 - Migration
 - Urbanisation & population increase
 - Food and energy security
 - Global needs and human-water interactions
- 10.** In your opinion, are there any missing drivers? (*open question*)
- 11.** Water4All SRIA has identified the following enablers, i.e., factors facilitating activities and the attainment of Water4All objectives. Rank the enablers according to their importance (1 is most important and 5 is least important)
- The digital revolution (big data, AI, IoT, Digital Twins)
 - Existing research infrastructure & technologies
 - Open science and responsible research and innovation
 - Changes in people's vision towards natural resources
 - Technologies and new (regulatory and economic) frameworks
- 12.** In your opinion, are there any missing enablers? (*open question*)

In addition, there will be some background questions regarding e.g., country and type/background of the respondent (citizen, private sector, research, research funding organisation, governmental organisation, ministry, NGO). Moreover, although the public consultation is designed to be anonymous, we plan to ask the respondents if they would be willing to give their contact details (e-mail) for further discussions on the survey questions.

Target groups

The purpose of the public consultation is to collect the views of different types of stakeholders and society at large. While it will be open to anyone interested, the main target group(s) are people working in water sector or with strong links to it. Based on previous corresponding surveys, most respondents in these types of surveys are researchers or working for a research-performing organisation (Water JPI 2019, JPI Oceans 2020). Care should be taken to reach other types of respondents (e.g., industry, policy makers, NGOs, indigenous communities) to achieve inclusiveness and a balanced view. There have also often been geographical biases, making it crucial that the survey is advertised actively among all partner countries.

Progress plan

Prior to the initiation of the survey, we will afford the Water4All Advisory Boards the opportunity to provide their insights and comments on the queries posed in the public consultation. This proactive approach ensures the incorporation of any emerging issues that may arise in the immediate vicinity of the survey launch. The public consultation will be opened via the Water4All website by May 2024 and will be closed after 1.5-2 months from opening. It is expected that the partner organisations will advertise the public consultation opportunity to their contacts right after the consultation survey is opened. After the survey is closed, the results will be collected, uploaded to the collaborative platform (access restricted to Water4All partners), and analysed by Task participants. The outcomes will be used for the revision work of the Water4All SRIA.

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