# Water Forum brings Irish and European leaders together to explore the future of water resilience in Ireland

11th November 2026

**Building Water Resilience conference recognised as an Associated Event of Ireland's EU Council Presidency, featuring leading international experts and senior representatives from across Ireland's water sector.**

The Water Forum (An Fóram Uisce) will welcome leading Irish and European experts, policymakers, scientists and representatives from across the water sector to its national conference, *Building Water Resilience – Connecting Policy, Action and Communities*, on Thursday, 12th November, at the Tullamore Court Hotel, Co. Offaly. The conference will explore how Ireland can strengthen its water resilience in response to growing pressures on water resources and services.

Ireland's unusually dry summer highlighted the importance of water resilience, demonstrating how prolonged periods of low rainfall can put pressure on water supplies, rivers and ecosystems. With climate change bringing greater extremes, from drought to intense rainfall and flooding, and growing demand placing additional pressure on water resources and infrastructure, the need to strengthen resilience is becoming increasingly important.

Taking place at a pivotal moment for European water policy, the conference will explore how Ireland can translate the ambitions of the **European Water Resilience Strategy**, adopted in June 2025, into practical action to protect water resources, strengthen water services and prepare for the challenges of a changing climate.

The event will feature two prominent international voices on water resilience:

- **Henk Ovink**, internationally recognised water expert and Executive Director of the Global Commission on the Economics of Water, who will deliver the opening keynote address.
- **Veronica Manfredi**, Director at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENV), who will present the EU Water Resilience Strategy and its implications for the years ahead.

They will be joined by senior representatives from Government Departments, State agencies, local authorities, research institutions, environmental and agricultural organisations, as well as community representatives, reflecting the broad range of interests involved in water management in Ireland.

Discussions will explore practical approaches to strengthening water resilience, including nature-based solutions, river restoration, agriculture and wastewater management, alongside the importance of community involvement and citizen science in protecting Ireland's water resources.

**Dr Matt Crowe, Chair of the Water Forum, said:**

*"The European Water Resilience Strategy provides an important opportunity to rethink how we approach these challenges. But strategies alone will not deliver resilience. What matters now is how we turn ambition into action, and how we work together across sectors to make that happen*.

*"We are delighted to bring together such an influential group of Irish and European experts from across the water sector. With Ireland holding the EU Council Presidency, this is a particularly important opportunity to share perspectives, strengthen collaboration and consider how we can build a more resilient water future for Ireland"*

The conference also takes place during Science Week 2026, highlighting the importance of connecting scientific evidence with policy and practical action to protect Ireland's water resources.

**ENDS**

**Notes to Editors**

**About the conference**

*Building Water Resilience – Connecting Policy, Action and Communities takes place on Thursday, 12 November 2026, at the Tullamore Court Hotel, Co. Offaly.*

Organised by the Water Forum (An Fóram Uisce), the conference is recognised as an Associated Event of Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union and takes place during Science Week 2026.

**About the Water Forum**

The Water Forum (An Fóram Uisce) is a statutory national multi-stakeholder body established under the Water Services Act 2017. It brings together representatives from a broad range of sectors to provide advice on water management in Ireland.

The Forum advises the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Uisce Éireann, the Commission for Regulation of Utilities and the Water Policy Advisory Committee on water management and the implementation of the Water Framework Directive.

The Forum is chaired by Dr Matt Crowe.

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