



African Water and  
Sanitation Association

Association Africaine de  
l'Eau et de l'Assainissement



HUNGARIAN  
WATER  
PARTNERSHIP

## Global Water and Sanitation Connect 2026 -

### AfWASA - HWP Benchmarking Visit

**24<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> of February 2026 | Budapest, Hungary**

More than a visit — *Global Water and Sanitation Connect 2026* is your gateway to cutting-edge innovation, strategic collaboration, and transformative solutions for Africa's water future. From **24<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> of February 2026**, Budapest will host **40-45 senior African water leaders** — Managing Directors, CTOs, and decision-makers from leading utilities and organisations — for **four days of immersive learning, technology exchange, and high-level networking**.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of February, delegates will join the **The Future of Water – Innovative Responses to Global Water Challenges Forum** organised in partnership with **Planet Budapest 2026**, Central Europe's premier sustainability expo. This one-day event will connect you with global water expertise through cross-continental dialogue involving the Hungarian and International Water Associations, as well as major international platforms such as **Global Water Operators Partnership (GWOPA)**, **ASEM Water**, **European Water Association (EWA)**, and **German Water Partnership (GWP)**.

#### What to expect:

- **Interactive workshops & panel dialogues** tackling Africa's most pressing water challenges.
- **Technical visits** to advanced Hungarian plants and factories showcasing practical, scalable solutions.
- **Knowledge exchange** with innovators and industry leaders from Europe, Asia, and Africa.

#### Key focus areas:

- **Drinking Water Purification Technologies** – from surface and groundwater treatment, precipitation and filtration systems, regenerable adsorbent-based technologies, to decentralized mobile systems and UN-recognised Hungarian WASH innovations.
- **Wastewater & Sludge Solutions** – including centralized and decentralized treatment, sludge-to-energy, and advanced sludge utilisation.
- **Non-Revenue Water Reduction** – cutting-edge detection, monitoring, and IoT-based solutions.
- **Smart Systems & Data Management** – advanced measurement, analytics, and performance optimisation.



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- **Rainwater Harvesting & Reuse** – industrial and agricultural applications with proven case studies.
- **Global Case Studies** – insights from the Carpathian Basin, Southeast Asia, and Africa.

This is your opportunity to explore **world-class technologies**, engage with **policy and funding experts**, and forge partnerships that can **drive real impact** across Africa's water and sanitation landscape.

*Your voice, your expertise, and your leadership can help shape a stronger, more sustainable water future for the continent.*

## **AfWASA Benchmarking Program**

### **DAY 0 (24rd of February) – Arrival and Welcome activities**

Your journey in Budapest begins here! From the moment you arrive at the **Novotel Budapest Danube**, nestled in the heart of the city a short distance from the Danube, you'll find yourself in the perfect setting to connect, collaborate, and prepare for an inspiring week ahead. With its excellent conference facilities and warm hospitality, the hotel will serve as both your base and your networking hub during the visit.

The afternoon will ease you into the programme with check-in from midday, followed by an **informal welcome ceremony** where you will meet fellow delegates, hear opening words from our hosts, and receive a concise introduction to the week's agenda. You'll gain a first look at the exciting mix of professional events, off-site technical visits, and cultural activities planned, as well as an overview of Hungary's dynamic water sector and the partner organisations you'll be engaging with.

We'll close the day with a **relaxed dinner and drinks** at the hotel — your first opportunity to reconnect with old acquaintances, meet new peers from across the continent and beyond, and start building the relationships that will define this unique cross-continental exchange.

### **AGENDA DAY 0**

**12:00 - onward:** Check-in at the hotel and with HWP representatives to the Global Water Connect

**17:00 - Welcome Ceremony**

- Welcome words
- Introducing the Agenda – Brief overview of the purpose of the visit and key objectives, and expected outcomes
- Brief overview of the Program, Events, Off-site visits and networking opportunities.
- Brief Introduction of the Hungarian Water Sector
- Brief Introduction of the Hungarian Partner Organisations

**18:30 - Dinner and drinks in the hotel (accompanied by Hungarian cultural folk show)**

## **DAY 1 (25th of February) – Specific water and sanitation technologies day**

Day 1 of the *AfWASA Global Water and Sanitation Connect 2026* is dedicated to showcasing innovation, technology, and practical expertise. We begin the day with an intensive workshop programme alongside HWP experts, Hungarian business leaders and engineers. The sessions will explore real-world applications of advanced technologies and strategies. Topics include:

**Drinking water purification innovations** — from surface and groundwater treatment, precipitation and filtration, regenerable adsorbents, and reverse osmosis, to decentralized mobile systems.

**Wastewater and sludge management** — centralized and decentralized WWTPs, fecal sludge treatment, sludge-to-energy, and UN-recognised Hungarian WASH solutions.

**Non-revenue water reduction** — measurement, monitoring, IoT, and smart technologies.

**Rainwater harvesting** — treatment, reuse, and industrial/agricultural applications.

### **Hydrogeological research**

The afternoon continues with a focus on **industry-leading manufacturing through a tour of Grundfos's pump production facility in Székesfehérvár.**

The day will conclude with a traditional Hungarian dinner and cultural show.

## **AGENDA Day 1**

9:00 – 13:00 - HWP Workshops

- Drinking Water Purification Technologies and Solutions
  - o Case Studies from the Pannonian Basin, South East Asia and Africa
- Wastewater Treatment Technologies and Solutions
  - o Case Studies from the Pannonian Basin, South East Asia and Africa
- Non-revenue Water Reduction Technologies and Solutions
  - o Case Studies from the Pannonian Basin, South East Asia and Africa
- Rainwater Harvesting, Treatment and Utilization
  - o Case Studies from Industrial and Agricultural Use
- Hydrogeological research

13:00 - 14:00 - Business Lunch in the hotel

15:00 - 17:00 – Grundfos Pump Production Facility in Székesfehérvár

- Pump Production Facility: The new production facility primarily manufactures products related to water supply and wastewater treatment. These include high-performance pumps used for wastewater treatment.

19:30 – Traditional Hungarian Dinner (Restaurant)

## **DAY 2 (26th of February) – From Breakthrough Treatment to Precision Engineering**

Day 2 of *AfWASA Global Water and Sanitation Connect 2026* takes delegates on a journey through **cutting-edge Hungarian water and wastewater technologies**, combining advanced treatment solutions with world-class engineering and manufacturing.

In the morning, we will start with an **exclusive technical visit** to one of Europe's most modern wastewater treatment facilities — the **Budapest Central Wastewater Treatment Plant**. This flagship facility has a daily biological treatment capacity of **350,000 cubic metres**. Combining physical, chemical, and biological processes, including energy utilization of the wastewater sludge, it serves as a benchmark for sustainable urban water management in Central Europe. For those particularly interested in **non-revenue water reduction**, the day-to-day operation of the **Budapest Waterworks Dispatcher Centre** will also be introduced, providing insight into real-time monitoring, smart data systems, and operational solutions that reduce water loss and improve service efficiency.

In the afternoon, we will visit NIVELCO's Measurement and control devices Production Facility, a hub for precision instrumentation and control systems.

The day will conclude with a Gala Dinner on a Danube River Cruise.

### **AGENDA DAY 2**

09:00 - 11:30 - Off-site visit to the Budapest Central Wastewater Treatment Plant

- Topics will cover: Wastewater Treatment technologies, Treatment plant operational aspects, Non-revenue water reduction, Sludge-to-energy and more

12:00 - 13:30 - Business Lunch (light lunch at the BCWTP)

14:00 - 15:30 - Off-site visit to NIVELCO-Measurement and control devices Production Facility

- Measurement and control devices Production Facility Visit (Pest) – The facility manufactures industrial level measurement and control products. They have been awarded the 2025 Millennium Award in recognition of its outstanding role in intellectual property protection and innovation.

16:00 – 18:00 – Free activity

18:30 - Evening: Gala Dinner on the Danube

### **DAY 3 (27th of February) – PLANET BUDAPEST 2026 - The Future of Water – Innovative Responses to Global Water Challenges Forum**

Day 3 places *AfWASA Global Water and Sanitation Connect 2026* at the heart of **Planet Budapest 2026** — Central Europe's **premier sustainability expo, exhibition, and experience programme**. This biennial event brings together **global leaders, innovators, and decision-makers** to address the most pressing environmental challenges of our time. For our African delegation, this is an **unparalleled opportunity to join the international stage, forge strategic partnerships, and connect directly with the world's most forward-thinking water sector actors**.

Throughout the day, delegates will engage in **high-level dialogues and panel sessions** alongside representatives of the Hungarian and various International Associations, as well as global platforms such as **GWOPA, EWA, and GWP**. The programme will focus on **practical, scalable solutions** that can be adapted to Africa's unique water and sanitation challenges — from **advanced treatment technologies and smart infrastructure to financing models and policy frameworks** that drive innovation and sustainability.

Beyond the formal sessions, *Planet Budapest 2026* offers a dynamic environment to explore **cutting-edge technologies**, and connect with over 200 **stakeholders from industry, government, and international development**. With participants from across Europe, Asia, and Africa, this is the perfect space to share African perspectives, learn from global case studies, and spark collaborations that can shape the continent's water future for decades to come.

*For Africa's water leaders, this is more than a conference day — it's a global platform to showcase expertise, influence dialogue, and secure partnerships that deliver real, lasting impact.*

### **AGENDA DAY 3**

**09:00 – Arrival, registration**

**9:30 - Welcome words**

- **Dr. János Áder** - Former President of Hungary, Chairman of the Board of Trustees at the Blue Planet Foundation (To be confirmed)
- **Dr. Blaise Moussa** - President of the AfWASA
- **Dr. Károly Kovács** - President of the Hungarian Water Partnership

**9:45 – 10:30 - Introduction of the Hungarian Water and Sanitation Sector**

- Keynote speech:  
**Prof András Szöllösi-Nagy** - *Doctor of Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Chairholder of the UNESCO Chair on Water Conflict Management, Secretary General of the Paris based UNESCO International Hydrological Programme, Rector of the UNESCO-IHE Institute of Water Education, Delft, the Netherlands (To be confirmed)*

- **Dr. Károly Kovács** - President of the Hungarian Water Association (HWA) - Hungarian Water and Sanitation Infrastructure Developments
- **Mr. Bálint Horváth** - Secretary-General of the Hungarian Water Partnership – Hungarian Water Sector Innovations Beyond Borders
- **Mr. Péter Kovács** - Water Director of Hungary, Hungarian General Directorate of Water Management

#### 10:30 - 11:00 – Coffee Break

#### 11:00 – 13:30 - Session 1: Global water challenges

- Keynote speech: *Where is water headed in the world? – a global perspective*  
**Dr. Csaba Kőrösi** - Strategic Director of the Blue Planet Climate Protection Foundation and former UN General Assembly President
- Keynote speech 2: Hungarian contributions to solving global water challenges – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary
- **Panel 1 - Discussion on global water challenges**
  - **EU Water Commissioner** (To be confirmed)
  - **Prof. Harsha Ratnaweera**, President of the European Water Association (EWA)
  - **AfWASA**
  - **Dr. Rose Kaggwa**, Director of the African Water and Sanitation Academy (AWASA)
  - **Mr. Géza Csörnyei**, Representative of Eastern-Europe in the Steering Committee of the Global Water Operators Partnership
  - International Water Association
  - **Mr. Zhang Rui**, Deputy Director of ASEM Water

#### 13:30 – 14:30 - Business Lunch and Networking

#### 14:30 – 16:00 - Session 2 Financing Global water challenges –discussion on traditional and emerging private capital project financing models

- **Panel 2 - Funding for projects supporting SDG 6**
  - Keynote speech: **World Bank**
  - Keynote speech: **Zoomlion Ghana Limited**
  - Moderator: **Mr. Bálint Horváth** - Secretary-General of the Hungarian Water Partnership
  - **Panel discussion on financing water developments**
    - **African Development Bank** (To be confirmed)
    - **EXIM Bank** (To be confirmed)
    - **Hungarian National Bank**
    - **Mrs. Stefania Ciruolo**, Head of the EIB Group Office in Hungary of the European Investment Bank
    - **European Bank for Reconstruction and Development** (To be confirmed)

- Development Bank of South Africa - DBSA
- Panel 3 –How to respond to the challenges and utilize funding opportunities - best practices and lessons learned by national and regional associations
  - Panel discussion on best practices and case studies
    - Vietnam Water Supply and Sewerage Association
    - Dr. MyungSoo Yoo, Vice-President of the Korean Water and Wastewater Association (KWWA)
    - Dr. Ing. Nicoleta Sanda Brisan – President of CLEMS
    - Mr. Teodor Popa, Incoming Vice-President of the International Association of Water Service Companies in the Danube River Catchment Area (IAWD)
    - German Water Partnership (To be confirmed)
    - Mr. Péter Kovács, Director-General of the Hungary Helps Agency

16:10 - Ceremonial Signing of Cooperation and Partnership Agreements

16:30 - Guided visit of the PLANET Budapest 2026

- Planet Expo and the immersive interactive experience

19:00 – 21:00 – Networking and Dinner (Cultural Show and Closing Ceremony)

#### **DAY 4 (28th of February) – Sightseeing Budapest**

After three days of intensive technical visits, workshops, and international dialogue, **Day 4** offers delegates the chance to experience the cultural richness and beauty of Budapest. This leisure day is designed to give our African water leaders a well-deserved break, an introduction to the city's history, and a taste of Hungarian hospitality.

#### **Proposed itinerary:**

- **Morning panoramic city tour** – A private coach tour highlighting Budapest's most iconic sights: the Parliament Building, Heroes' Square, the Chain Bridge, and panoramic views from Fisherman's Bastion.
- **Guided stroll through the Buda Castle District** – Wander cobblestone streets, visit Matthias Church, and learn about the city's centuries-old heritage.
- **Street food lunch in the Great Market Hall** – Dive into Budapest's bustling indoor market and taste your way through traditional favourites and modern street food twists — from lángos and chimney cake to artisan sausages and fresh pastries. Delegates can enjoy a relaxed, social atmosphere while sampling multiple flavours.
- **Afternoon options:**

- **Thermal bath experience** – Budapest is known as the “City of Spas,” built on over 100 natural hot springs. The historic **Széchenyi Thermal Bath**, one of Europe’s largest spa complexes, features 18 pools, including outdoor thermal baths where you can soak in 38°C water even in the crisp winter air. The elegant **Gellért Baths**, famed for their Art Nouveau architecture and mosaic interiors, offer mineral-rich waters believed to have therapeutic benefits for relaxation and wellness.
- **Market shopping and leisure** – For those who prefer, more time can be spent browsing local crafts, wines, and delicacies at the market or nearby Váci Street.

This day blends **cultural discovery, authentic food experiences, and relaxation**, offering a memorable close to the week.