

IDWS 2025 Concludes with Focus on Global Knowledge Exchange, Financial Opportunities, and Scalable Water Solutions

JEDDAH, SAUDI ARABIA, December 13, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The 4th Innovation Driven Water Sustainability Conference (IDWS) 2025 concluded on Wednesday in Jeddah, confirming its status as one of the world's most influential platforms for shaping the future of water innovation, sustainability, and security. Gathering senior global policymakers and international industry leaders, this year's edition has advanced critical dialogue on safeguarding the planet's most vital resource, with Saudi Arabia at the forefront.

Among the most consequential engagements were a series of meetings that brought together discussions powered by SWA, centred on shared challenges, knowledge exchange, and exploring opportunities within the global water ecosystem. Attended by select industry leaders and federal government officials, including representatives from the Singapore Water Authority, and the World Bank, the discussions underscored the rising international significance of IDWS. As water increasingly becomes the world's most critical strategic resource – central to everything from economic resilience to climate adaptation and, ultimately,



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human survival – the sessions highlighted the shared responsibility of nations to safeguard the future. Michael Toh, Managing Director of Singapore Water Association, which signed an MoU with the Saudi Water Authority this week, outlined a route for a strategic partnership for international collaboration. He detailed how the small Southeast Asian island is different from Saudi Arabia in that it gets plenty of tropical rains, yet does not have any natural water resources. Singapore, he added, has invested US\$7 billion over five years in research and development, achieving 100 per cent access to clean drinking water. The country has diversified into non-conventional water resources, including desalination and NeWater – its reclaimed sewage water, which testing has shown to be cleaner than potable water.

URGENT NEED FOR WATER INVESTMENT

Meanwhile, emphasising the globality of IDWS 2025, Jaehyang So, Chair of the TEC (Technical Committee), Global Water Partnership, took to the stage to highlight the African Union's Water Investment Programme, stressing the need for a steady stream of investment in water, with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on water one of the worst five performing SDGs, largely as a result of climate change and global population growth. So highlighted that with Africa one of the world's top two areas for population growth, continental leaders are now prioritising water security. However, the water expert pointed out that while an estimated US\$60 billion investment is required to achieve water security in Africa, currently only one per cent of private sector investment is made in water and infrastructure. The African Union's Water Investment Programme is making strides to address the issue with a recent summit in Cape Town, South Africa, helping to identify US\$10-12 billion of potential investment in water projects. She ended her session with a clear message: "We need water innovations to be scaled as quickly as possible, nationally and globally."



Investors, innovators, and global institutions gather in Saudi to outline how capital, collaboration, and governance can accelerate long-term water sustainability



Michael Toh, Managing Director of Singapore Water Association

MIYATHON WINNERS CROWNED AND NEW AWARDS ANNOUNCED

The impactful three-day IDWS 2025 concluded with a stream of accolades and announcements, including a new IDWS Water Content Award winners for 2026 - an initiative aimed at enhancing content creation in the water sector.

The final showcase also saw the winners crowned of the innovative Miyahthon, a water 'hackathon' celebrating sustainable solutions: The award winners were: Separation Membrane Innovation (SMI); Raaq; Smart Corr; Aqua Volt; VibraFlow; Mizan For Technology Solutions; AquaTwin; NuPlasTec; Hessian; Smart Green Solutions; HydroMine; Earth Pulse and The Door of Innovation.

The Miyahthon competition underscores Saudi Arabia's commitment to foster the next generation pipeline of innovation and real-world impact for water sustainability.

His Excellency Eng. Abdullah bin Ibrahim Al-Abdulkarim, President of the Saudi Water Authority, said: "Saudi Arabia is fully committed to leading impactful change for a better future, and IDWS 2025 has showcased the full strength of the Kingdom's dedication to water sustainability. From an opening that set a clear vision, three days of knowledge exchange, invaluable insights, thought-provoking dialogue and direction-setting have set the tone. The energy across the Global Prize for Innovation in Water (GPIW) and the Miyahthon, mirrors the Kingdom's ambitions. As we conclude, the message is clear: Saudi Arabia is investing in ideas, implementation and action. Through MOUs, start-up support and deep collaboration across public and private sectors, and academia, we are driving tangible progress and building a resilient water future for generations to come."

A total of 27 agreements were signed over the conference's three days, spanning five core tracks: the development of advanced technologies; capacity building; support for innovation and entrepreneurship; the enhancement of service efficiency; and the strengthening of research and development collaboration. Collectively, these agreements are set to advance the sector towards higher levels of readiness and sustainability.

The final day saw the Saudi Water Authority (SWA) sign five agreements, including a collaboration with Taibah Valley (Taibah University) in the fields of technology and digital transformation, and an agreement with Yokogawa to develop innovative AI-driven leak detection solutions. Additional agreements included a partnership with Meidensha Corporation to advance ceramic membrane technologies used in preliminary water treatment, a research collaboration with Najran University to develop photocatalysts for the treatment of emerging contaminants, and a training agreement with GI AQUA to deliver specialised programmes aimed at enhancing national workforce capabilities.

The conference also witnessed a number of major launches, most notably the inauguration of the SWA Rabigh Water Oasis, which entered the Guinness World Records as the world's largest water innovation oasis. Further announcements included the launch of the National Framework for Innovation Partnerships in the Water Sector (Water Strip) by the Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture, in collaboration with SWA, the announcement of the winners of the Global Prize for Innovation in Water (GPIW) 2025, and the Deal Day activities, which featured the unveiling of several new projects and partnerships.

Mike Champion, CEO, Tahaluf, said: "As a hugely impactful IDWS 2025 concludes, it serves as a

reminder of the power of collective ambition and the impact it can generate. Over the past three days, we have provided a platform, and the foundations, for the global water industry to reframe challenges as opportunities and have seen ideas transformed into actionable pathways - all fuelled by Saudi Arabia's ambition to drive real-world impact. The conversations and collaborations forged here strengthen our shared commitment to a more resilient water future for the Kingdom and the world. This is just the beginning, and we look forward to continuing this momentum next year.

IDWS 2025 marked another milestone in Saudi Arabia's journey as a global leader in water innovation, action, and impact. Over the past three days, the global water ecosystem witnessed the Kingdom's ambition come to life, from vision to real solutions, partnerships, and unwavering commitments that set new standards for the world. As Saudi Arabia drives forward with its transformative approach to sustainability, IDWS continues to amplify the Kingdom's role in shaping a more secure water future for all. Next year promises to be even more impactful, showcasing once again what the Kingdom can achieve when determination, innovation, and collaboration come together.

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