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2026 UN WATER CONFERENCE
8-10 DEC | ABU DHABI



2026 UN WATER CONFERENCE

Abu Dhabi | 8-10 December 2026

YOUR GUIDE TO

THE 2026 UN WATER CONFERENCE

Everything you need to plan your journey, arrival and Conference experience

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Welcome to 2026 UN Water Conference: What you need to do

Welcome to the 2026 UN Water Conference. This guide brings together the practical information you need to prepare for your visit, enter the UAE, reach the venue and move around the Conference.

ACTION REQUIRED

Complete the steps below as early as possible.

Registration, UN accreditation and visa requirements are separate processes.

Step	What to do	Why it matters
1	**Complete the UN registration if you require Blue Zone access**	UN accreditation is separate from Host Country registration via country missions
2	**Complete the UAE Host Country Registration**	Required for all Conference participants - Blue Zone and the Oasis, whether or not you need a visa.
3	**Check your UAE entry and visa requirements**	Requirements depend on nationality and passport type. Do not travel until your entry requirements are confirmed.
4	**Book accommodation**	Official Conference accommodation is available for stays from 30 November onwards, subject to availability.
5	**Confirm your travel and airport transfer arrangements**	Zayed International Airport (AUH) is the principal gateway; some participants may wish to arrive through Dubai International Airport (DXB) and Sharjah International Airport SHJ).
6	**Check the latest Conference information before departure**	Programme, shuttle schedules, venue information and participant contacts may be updated as the Conference approaches.
7	**Explore The Oasis: country pavilions, sponsorship and exhibition**	Opportunities to apply for a country pavilion, exhibit space or sponsor; via the Conference website (see "The Oasis: sponsorship, pavilions and exhibition").

Key online resources

UN Registration: sdgs.un.org/conferences/water2026/participate

Host Country registration: register.unwaterconferenceuae.com

Conference website: unwaterconferenceuae.com

Accommodation portal: unwaterconferenceuae.masarra.com

Registration and accreditation

There are two separate registration processes. Which ones you need depends on where you will participate.

	UN Registration - Blue Zone	UAE Host Country Registration - The Oasis
Who	Member States and stakeholders accredited to the United Nations	All participants, including those also registered with the UN
Purpose	Accreditation for the official UN programme	Host Country registration and participant arrangements, including visa processing where applicable
Access	Blue Zone	The Oasis; does not replace UN accreditation for Blue Zone access
Status	Registration is open through the official UN process	Registration is open through the UAE Conference website

IMPORTANT Host Country registration is mandatory for all participants, including participants who do not require a visa. If you need access to the Blue Zone, you must also complete the applicable UN registration and accreditation process.

Registration for Side Events

Oasis Side Events – Call for Applications

The **Oasis**, managed by the UAE as the co-host country, is a dedicated non-accredited zone located adjacent to the Blue Zone. It will complement the formal UN Conference programme by providing a UAE-hosted space designed to open the water conversation to a wider community. Through dynamic programming, pavilions, immersive exhibitions, and networking zones, the Oasis will bring together people, ideas, and innovation from around the world, creating opportunities for meaningful connections and collaboration.

A **limited number of side events** will be hosted in the Oasis. Entities registered to participate in the Oasis are invited to apply for consideration through the link below.

Application Form: https://forms.gle/CexundjVMo49mf3J7

Deadline for applications: 23 October 2026

Priority will be given to side events that:

- Bring forward diverse ideas, perspectives, and cross-sectoral approaches;
- Feature key commitments, announcements, or launches; and
- Showcase new partnerships, collaborations, and opportunities for collective action.

Eligibility: Any entity registered to the Oasis may apply to host a side event, regardless of UN accreditation status.

Entities whose **Blue Zone side event proposals were not approved**, but who remain interested in convening an event during the Conference, are **encouraged to apply for consideration in the Oasis**.

Please note that submitting an application does **not guarantee approval**. Applications will be reviewed based on the available capacity and the overall program of the Oasis.

Blue Zone access

Blue Zone access is controlled through United Nations accreditation. Registration for Member States, accredited stakeholders and entities is now open on the UN website. Your Host Country registration does not by itself provide Blue Zone access. Access to individual spaces may also depend on your accreditation category.

Host Country registration

Complete your Host Country registration here:

register.unwaterconferenceuae.com

Host Country registration is mandatory for all participants, **regardless of whether they require a visa to enter the United Arab Emirates**. Participants must complete the application and provide all required information within the specified timelines.

Visa and the UAE entry requirements

BEFORE YOU BOOK TRAVEL

Check the UAE entry requirements applicable to your nationality and passport type. Registration or accreditation for the Conference does not constitute a visa or guarantee entry to the UAE.

1. Check whether you require a visa

Regular passport holders should check the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs visa-exemption information: www.mofa.gov.ae/en/visa-exemptions-for-non-citizen

2. If you require a visa before travel

Follow the official Conference registration instructions and submit the required application and supporting documentation through the designated UAE visa process. The visa application link becomes **active only once you have completed your Host Country (Oasis) registration**. Participants are advised to apply for visa no earlier than 12 October 2026, and 72 hours after submission of the Oasis registration, to allow for the activation of the unique visa link following the registration.

Designated event visa application service (active 72 hours after Host Country registration):

https://smartservices.icp.gov.ae/echannels/web/client/guest/index.html#/eventVisa/request/638/step1?administrativeRegionId=1&withException=false

3. Allow time for processing

Visas are expected to be issued within one week following submission of a complete application and supporting documents, subject to UAE authorities' approval and procedures.

Passport requirements

- Ensure your passport is valid for at least six months after entry to the UAE.
- UN passport holders should provide the nationality shown in their original passport while registering the UN passport number in The Oasis form.
- Participants remain responsible for ensuring their visa and entry permissions are valid for their intended travel dates.

- The Conference visa is single-entry, valid for entry for 60 days from issue, and permits a stay of up to 90 days from entry, subject to applicable conditions.

Visa assistance

Host Country contact:

- Email: Mohamed.SAlkatheeri@icp.gov.ae
- Mobile: +971 50 999 0962

DO NOT TRAVEL until you have confirmed that you meet the applicable UAE entry requirements.

Accommodation

A range of accommodation options in Abu Dhabi and Dubai has been sourced for Conference participants, with different hotel categories and price points offered, subject to availability.

Official accommodation booking portal: unwaterconferenceuae.masarra.com

Booking period	30 November onwards
When to book	As early as possible; December is a high-demand period in the UAE
Registration status	You do not need to wait for Conference registration confirmation before booking a hotel
Cancellation Policy	Bookings are subject to flexible cancellation terms, with full or partial refunds available depending on the cancellation date. Terms and conditions apply and will be reflected on the accommodation booking portal.
Accessible rooms	Available on request via reservations@masarra.ae

Booking period	30 November onwards
Delegation-funded rooms	Follow the instructions provided by your delegation, the UN, Host Country or sponsoring organisation and avoid duplicate bookings

Before confirming your booking

Please note

Official hotel availability and rates may change as the Conference approaches.

Accommodation providers with sustainability policies and certifications have been prioritised.

- If you require an accessible room, request it when booking rather than waiting until arrival.
- You may check whether your hotel is included in the official Conference shuttle network once the final hotel shuttle list is published on the Conference website.

Arriving in the UAE

Regardless of the airport you are arriving at

1. Complete the UAE immigration and entry procedures.
2. Collect checked baggage.
3. Proceed through customs.
4. Follow Conference signage or instructions for onward transportation, where provided.

Zayed International Airport (AUH), Abu Dhabi

Zayed International Airport is the principal international gateway for Conference participants and the closest airport to the venue. ADNEC and central Abu Dhabi are approximately 30 km from AUH, around 30-40 minutes by road under normal conditions, so most participants arriving here will reach their hotel or the venue with a short onward transfer. Conference welcome personnel are expected at designated airport locations to assist with information and onward travel. Exact locations are to be confirmed.

Dubai International Airport (DXB), Dubai

Some participants may wish to arrive through Dubai International Airport (DXB). Abu Dhabi is approximately 140 km from DXB, around 1.5 hours' drive by road under normal conditions, an onward ground transfer will be required. Options include pre-booked private transfer, metered taxi and recognised app-based services such as Careem and Uber. Participants arriving through DXB are encouraged to confirm their transfer arrangements in advance, particularly for late-night arrivals. For app-based services, we encourage participants to book using the 'Green' options to reduce GHG emissions of your journey.

Sharjah International Airport (SHJ), Sharjah

Some participants may also arrive through Sharjah International Airport (SHJ). Abu Dhabi lies approximately 170 km from SHJ, around 2 hours by road and an onward ground transfer will be required. Options include pre-booked private transfer, metered taxi and recognised app-based services such as Careem and Uber. Given the intercity distance, participants arriving through SHJ are encouraged to confirm their transfer arrangements in advance, particularly for late-night arrivals.

Airport to hotel transport

- Check your individual travel or delegation arrangements first to confirm whether a transfer has been arranged.
- If no transfer is arranged, regulated airport taxis are available at AUH, DXB and SHJ.
- Use only authorised transport services.
- Heads of State / Government, Ministers and designated VIP delegations, will receive separate arrival protocol and transport information where applicable.

Conference venue and access

The Conference will take place at Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC), Khaleej Al Arabi Street, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. The event will be conducted across two zones – the Blue Zone managed by the UN and the Oasis, managed by the UAE.

Understanding the two zones

	Blue Zone	The Oasis
Authority	United Nations	Co-Host Country - United Arab Emirates
Nature	Official UN-accredited programme	UAE-hosted space designed to open the water conversation to a wider community
Includes	Plenary sessions, six Interactive Dialogues, official UN side events,	Country and entity pavilions, exhibitions, innovation showcases, networking, partner meetings and public participation

	Blue Zone	The Oasis
	multilateral dialogue and commitments	
Access	Subject to UN accreditation	Subject to Host Country registration and arrangements

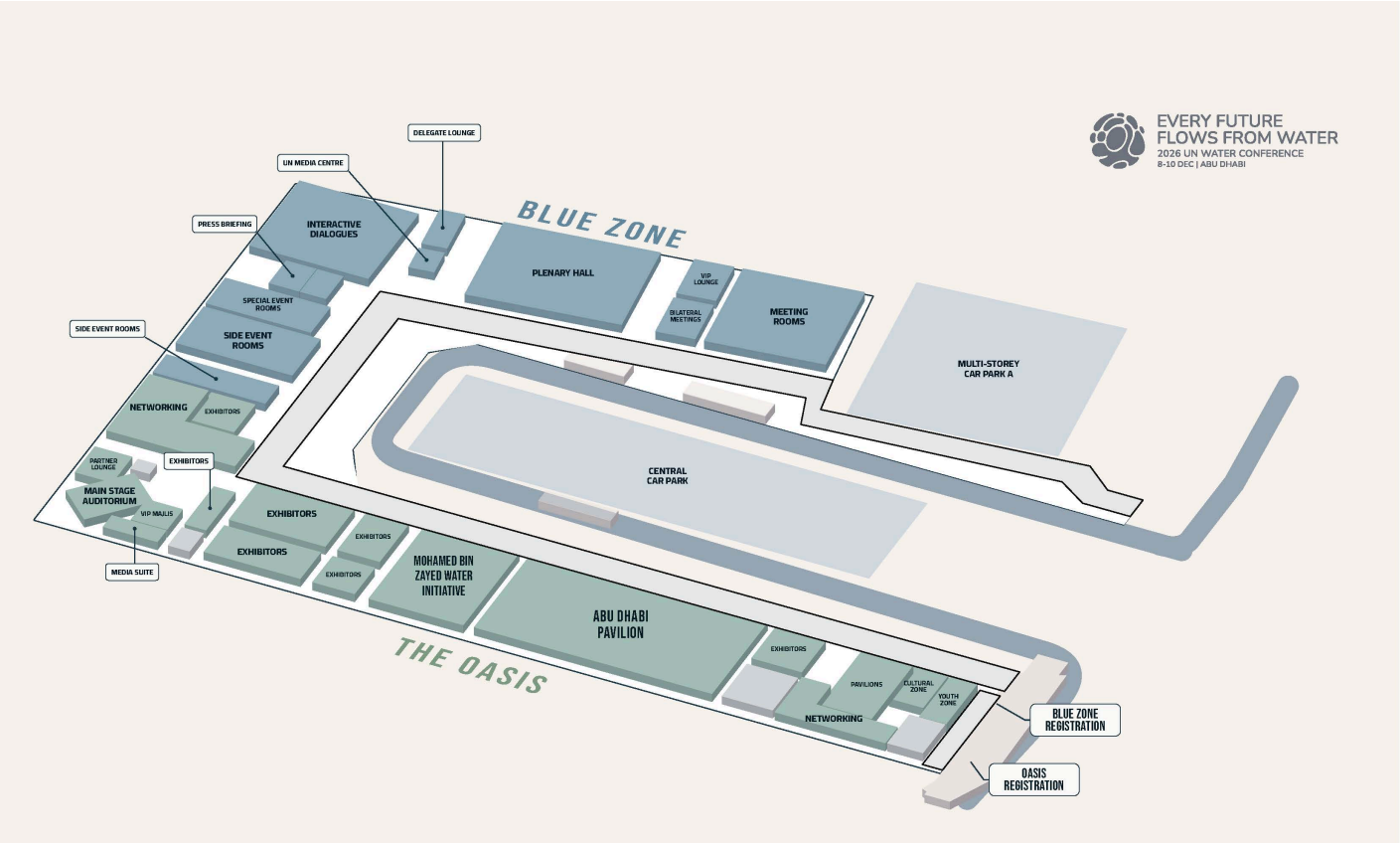
On arrival at ADNEC

- Allow sufficient time for security screening and access procedures.
- Carry your Conference badge/accreditation and appropriate identification.
- Follow the entrance and access instructions applicable to your accreditation category.

Be aware that temporary access restrictions may apply during movements of Heads of State/Government and other VIPs.

Venue Map

The map below shows the overall Conference footprint at ADNEC.



IMPORTANT

The map is an indicative planning map. Participants should follow the final venue map, on-site signage and any instructions issued with their accreditation.

LATEST VENUE INFORMATION

A detailed participant venue map, including entrances, registration, meeting rooms, information desks, medical facilities, prayer rooms, food and beverage areas, toilets and emergency exits, is being finalized and will be distributed through official Conference channels.

Getting to and from ADNEC

Official hotel shuttle service

A complimentary Conference shuttle service is planned between designated official Conference hotels and ADNEC during the Conference period. The vehicles will carry Conference branding.

- Services will be available around the official Conference programme.
- At participating hotels, follow Conference signage and instructions from transport personnel.
- Arrive at the hotel pick-up point at least 10 minutes before your intended departure.
- Allow additional journey time during peak traffic periods and before important sessions or meetings.
- If you require accessible transport, please make this known in advance.

TO BE CONFIRMED

Further details on transport options, including Park & Ride options, hotel shuttle services and various public and private transport options will be shared on the Conference website in due course.

Other transport in Abu Dhabi

Taxis are readily available throughout Abu Dhabi. For journeys outside the official Conference transport network, participants may use authorised taxis or recognised ride-hailing taxi apps such as Careem and Uber, which operate across the UAE, as well as Abu Dhabi Taxi.

Traffic conditions can vary, particularly during peak periods and around the Conference venue ADNEC. Build contingency into your journey time.

At the Conference

Security and personal belongings

- Comply with all Conference and venue security procedures communicated through official channels of the Conference.
- Security screening may be conducted when entering designated Conference areas.
- Carry your Conference accreditation and appropriate identification.
- Do not leave luggage or personal belongings unattended. Report unattended items to Conference or security personnel.

Medical assistance

Medical support will be available at ADNEC throughout official operating hours. Medical and first-aid locations will be identified on the venue map and through signage. If you need medical assistance while at ADNEC, please approach the nearest Conference staff member, security officer or information desk.

Participants requiring regular medication are encouraged to bring sufficient supplies for their stay and to check UAE requirements relating to any controlled medication before travelling.

UAE Emergency numbers

Police	**999**
Ambulance	**998**
Fire / Civil Defence	**997**

For serious or life-threatening emergencies, contact the appropriate UAE emergency service immediately. Participants are also advised to retain contact details for their relevant embassy or consulate accredited in the UAE.

Accessibility

The Conference is committed to providing an accessible environment. Participants requiring mobility assistance, alternative document formats or other support should identify their requirements through registration or contact the Conference team by an email to info@unwaterconferenceuae.com in advance. Accessible routes, lifts and facilities will be shown on the venue map.

Food, water and prayer facilities

- Food and beverage facilities will be available in designated venue areas.
- Provide dietary requirements and allergies during registration where requested and confirm ingredients with catering personnel if needed.
- Drinking water will be available throughout the venue.
- Prayer facilities will be available at or close to the venue and identified through signage and the venue map.

Practical information for your stay

Dress

The Conference dress standard is business attire. Participants are encouraged to dress professionally and respectfully in keeping with the international and diplomatic nature of the Conference and local customs. Conference spaces are air-conditioned, so a light jacket or additional layer may be useful.

Weather

December is generally one of the most pleasant times of year in Abu Dhabi with temperatures between 15-26 degrees Celsius. Check the forecast immediately before travelling. While most Conference activity will be indoors, some journeys and activities may involve outdoor areas.

Sustainability

The Conference Sustainability Action Plan is aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and UAE sustainability priorities, including low-carbon operations, circular-economy design, waste reduction and responsible procurement.

- Use shared or public transport where practical.
- Follow exhibitor guidance on sustainable materials where applicable.
- Avoid single-use plastics where possible.
- Use the correct waste-segregation facilities at the venue.

The Oasis: pavilions and partnership options

The Oasis, the UAE-hosted zone, is a living embodiment of where people, ideas, and solutions come together to create new possibilities. Inspired by our natural environment, a traditional oasis serves as a fertile place in the desert where freshwater reaches the surface from underground sources, sustaining people and planet.

The Oasis will be the main space at the event for all exhibitions and pavilions. It will also feature dynamic programming across the three days of the Conference, including a Main Stage and smaller convening spaces to marquee partner programming.

Organisations can participate through Country Pavilions, Sponsorship partnerships or Exhibition-only space.

Pavilion and showcase options

A country/institution pavilion or exhibition space provides a dedicated platform to showcase water priorities, host delegations and bilateral meetings, and connect with partners and investors.

Option	Size	Highlights
Turnkey pavilion	100 m²	Branded pavilion and entrance; private meeting room; reception; hospitality and networking zone; integrated screens
Turnkey pavilion	150 m²	Presentation theatre with stage; executive boardroom for 8; reception and lounge; hospitality and café area
Custom build pavilion	Over 100 m²	Fully bespoke national pavilion with dedicated design team and end-to-end delivery
Exhibition	50 m²	A compact but impactful branded environment designed for focused business development and stakeholder engagement.
Show ready stand	12 m²	A professional turnkey stand providing an efficient platform to showcase products, services and expertise. The open, accessible footprint supports brand visibility and networking.

Full cost covers space rental plus pavilion design and build, with air conditioning, Wi-Fi and standard power included. Prices exclude applicable taxes and are confirmed on application. Custom builds delivered by an organisation's own contractor may carry an additional surcharge.

Partnership options

Tier	Space	Role
Catalytic Partner	150 m² included	Lead a flagship platform, initiative or legacy programme; highest-level positioning and plenary access
Architectural Partner	100 m² included	Shape and deliver an approved forum, stage or programme area; main-stage access and flagship session
Impact Partner	50 m² included	Support a priority water theme; targeted visibility and panel speaking roles
Exhibition Only	50 / 100 / 150 m²	Dedicated stand presence to demonstrate projects, technology and solutions without partnership designation. Space purchased separately.

Partner space rental is included within the partnership package; stand design, build, production, utilities and upgrades are additional. Exhibition-only space and stand packages are priced separately. Benefits are indicative and subject to final programme, inventory and contract confirmation.

How to take part

Expression of Interest → Consultation and Proposal → Design → Sign-off and Contract → Build and Installation → Live, 8-10 December 2026.

ENQUIRIES

Apply online by submitting an Expression of Interest through the Conference website https://www.unwaterconferenceuae.com/en/oasis/exhibitors-and-partners.

Early submission provides the widest choice of locations and formats. A dedicated Account Manager then guides you from proposal through to onsite handover.

Contact: partnerships@unwaterconferenceuae.com

Media registration and partnership opportunities

Media representatives, including journalists, photographers and videographers, must complete the applicable UAE media accreditation journey. Media seeking Blue Zone access must also obtain separate UN media accreditation.

Media registration process

Step	Action
1	Register for The Oasis, selecting Media as your organisation type. https://register.unwaterconferenceuae.com/
2	Once registration is confirmed, apply for the appropriate **National Media Authority (NMA) permit** before travelling. www.nma.gov.ae/en/auth/signup
3	If reporting from the Blue Zone, complete the separate UN media accreditation process.
4	If bringing filming or photography equipment from outside the UAE, obtain the applicable equipment-entry permit. (www.nma.gov.ae)

IMPORTANT

Media interested in reporting from the Blue Zone must also apply for UN media accreditation. For details on this process please visit the UN media advisory page on:

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2026/09/water-conference-2026/

UAE Host Country registration and an NMA permit do not replace UN accreditation.
Once you have registered for The Oasis, the non-UN-accredited section of the conference, which is open to everyone—including the public, professionals and organisations, and media—you will also need to obtain a media permit from the UAE's National Media Authority.

NMA permits and indicative fees

Category	Indicative requirement / fee	Stated service time
Temporary foreign correspondent	ID, passport, photograph, media organisation introduction/assignment letter; AED 300	3 working days
Filming / photography equipment	ID, passport, photograph, requesting-entity letter and customs declaration; AED 500	24 hours
Foreign media office journalist in UAE	Where applicable; AED 500	3 working days

The appropriate NMA service, supporting documents and fee depend on the applicant's status and activity. Apply through the NMA e-services portal at www.nma.gov.ae (new applicants can register at www.nma.gov.ae/en/auth/signup) and confirm the current requirements directly with the NMA before travel.

Media engagement and partnerships

The Conference press office can support interview, comment and filming requests: email to media@unwaterconferenceuae.com.

Tailored media partnerships may include official recognition, dedicated media opportunities, podcast or broadcast activity, media passes, on-site publication visibility and, depending on the partnership, opportunities to contribute to the Conference program.

Media partners would typically support the Conference through editorial coverage, interviews or commentary, promotion across relevant print, digital, social and newsletter channels, and visibility for Conference branding and information.

MEDIA PARTNERSHIP ENQUIRIES

Partnership packages are tailored to individual media outlets. Email to media@unwaterconferenceuae.com for the most relevant package.

We look forward to welcoming you to Abu Dhabi for the 2026 UN Water Conference, 8-10 December 2026.