

MEDIA STATEMENT

**Africa Water Investment Summit Welcomes USD 10–12 billion in Preliminary Annual Investment
Pipelines, Global Outlook Council Launched**

22st August 2025



The AU-AIP Water Investment Summit 2025, held from 13 to 15 August in Cape Town, South Africa, mobilised preliminary potential financial commitments estimated at a conservative USD 10–12 billion annually. These investments, pledged by development banks, investors, bilateral partners, and governments, are directed towards the project pipelines showcased at the Summit from across the continent. Importantly, this figure excludes further pledges expected to be consolidated through the online portal established during the Summit — a clear signal that Africa’s financing momentum is building.

More than 1,700 delegates gathered for the inaugural Africa Water Investment Summit. Among them were 20 African Water Ministers, together with delegations from the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Barbados, the Netherlands, Italy, Germany and the United Kingdom. They were joined by financiers, civil society, academics, and diplomats, all united by a single goal: to close Africa’s vast water investment gap.

The Summit carried weight at the highest political levels. In attendance or represented were leaders, including King Mswati III of Eswatini, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud of Somalia, and President



Duma Boko of Botswana. They were joined by global partners: President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan of the UAE (represented by H.E. Sheikh Shakhboot Bin Nahyan Al Nahyan), Prime Minister Mia Mottley of Barbados (represented by Senior Minister William Duguid), President Paul Kagame of Rwanda (represented by Dr. Jimmy Gasore), and President Brahim Ghali of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (represented by H.E. Mohamed Yeslem Beissat).

Presiding over the event under South Africa's G20 Presidency, President Cyril Ramaphosa captured the significance of the gathering:

"This Summit is a landmark moment not only for Africa, but for the global movement for access to safe water for all. If we rise together, water can become not just a means of survival but a driver of economic transformation, innovation and peace."

The [Cape Town Declaration on Africa Water Investment in the context of G20](#) adopted at the Summit, reaffirms Africa's urgent need for investment, noting a USD 30 billion annual financing gap.

"This summit, convened under South Africa's historic G20 Presidency, has been more than a gathering; it has been a call to action, a platform for transformation, and proof to Africa's leadership in climate-resilient water security and safe sanitation. The Summit Declaration commits us to scaling up investments, improving governance, and increasing accountability in the water sector," said H.E. Moses Vilakati, Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment of the African Union Commission.

H.E. Nardos Bekele-Thomas urged Heads of State and Government to move from commitment to action by delivering bankable water solutions. She emphasised that universal access to water is achievable but demands a shift toward systemic change. She proposed the establishment of a Presidential Champions Initiative for WASH Access in Africa—an institutional mechanism to anchor top-level political engagement, foster transformative change, and promote high-level advocacy and peer accountability

Host Minister Hon. Pemmy Majodina, South Africa's Minister of Water and Sanitation, thanked investors for their commitments and urged for even greater investment to transform Africa's water sector.

"Over the last three days, we were all inspired by the Africa Water Vision 2025, which envisions *an Africa where there is equitable and sustainable use and management of water resources for poverty alleviation, socioeconomic development, regional cooperation and the environment*. In plenary, breakaway sessions and bilateral engagements, we all identified governance, finance, capacity and data gaps in the water sector as central themes that require urgent attention. Together, we must commit to pay focused attention to these matters. More importantly, the Summit has also helped to consolidate the position of AU Member States on water investment in preparation for the 2026 UN Water Conference, which will be hosted by the Government of Senegal and the United Arab Emirates," said Minister Majodina.

Global Outlook Council Launched

One of the most celebrated outcomes was the launch of the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments, established as a G20 Presidential Legacy Initiative of South Africa. This body will serve as the premier high-level platform to champion water globally, align financing with climate and development priorities, and track commitments leading into the 2026 UN Water Conference.



President Ramaphosa emphasised its global mission:

“The Global Outlook Council and the Global Water Investment Platform will serve as the world’s premier high-level political and investment platform on water. It will track progress, unlock finance, report annually and align efforts across the G20, UN, multilateral development banks and the private sector.”

President Ramaphosa acknowledged the distinguished leaders invited to serve alongside the South African G20 Presidency as co-chairs in guiding the work of the Council. These include President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan of the United Arab Emirates, Prime Minister Mia Mottley of Barbados, and Mr. Bill Gates, Co-Chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

President Ramaphosa also stated that invited Alternate Co-Chairs include President Jakaya Kikwete, Former President of Tanzania and Her Excellency Amina J. Mohammed, UN Deputy Secretary-General. H.E. Kikwete has already accepted the role.

“I commend H.E. Cyril Ramaphosa and President of the 2025 G20 for the launch of the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments. It is a remarkable G20 Presidential Legacy initiative, and the framing of a Global Investment Platform to sustain momentum. These are not mere new committees; they are instruments to mobilize capital at scale and align policy and regulation. Also, it will help track progress with transparency. Indeed, the AIP Water Investment Scorecard will help us hold ourselves accountable.”

The Council will be supported by a group of global leaders who will serve as Council Champions.

"It is a great honour for me to accept by the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments to be one of the champions in water investments, a demonstration of trust to the United Nations in our endeavour in addressing the needs faced by countries and the people on the ground especially in the water agenda," said H.E Retno Marsudi, Special Envoy for Water of the UN Secretary-General in her acceptance video message at the Summit.

[Watch the acceptance speech by H.E Retno Marsudi, Special Envoy for Water of the UN Secretary-General in her acceptance video message at the Summit.](#)

The AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit 2025 was convened by the Republic of South Africa, African Union Commission, AU Continental Africa Water Investment Programme (AIP), AU-AIP International High-Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa, the African Union Development Agency – NEPAD and the Global Water Partnership. It was hosted in the context of South Africa’s G20 Presidency, aligning with its priorities of rapid and inclusive economic growth, poverty and hunger eradication, and climate sustainability.

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Website: [AIP Water Investment Summit 2025 - Africa Water Investment Program](#)

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