

# Water Challenges in a Changing World

## APRIL NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the April newsletter! We have two exciting conferences coming up this year, and we'd love to see you there.

For [MnP26 \(Microplastics Conference\)](#), oral abstract submissions are now closed. However, we are still welcoming **poster abstract submissions** and **general registrations** for those who would like to attend and engage with the latest research in this space.

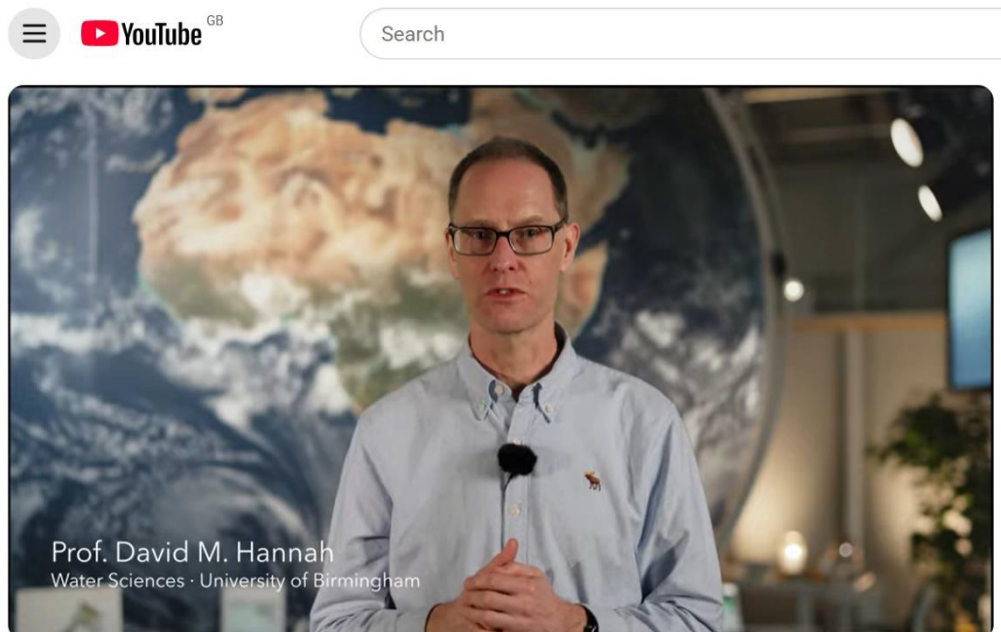
For [HydroEco26](#), we've extended the **early bird abstract submission deadline to 31 May 2026**. There's still plenty of time to get involved, and we strongly encourage you to submit your abstracts and register to attend.

In addition, we still have a limited number of places available for the [Catchment Science Summer School](#).

Read on in the newsletter for full details and links to all upcoming events.

## WATER IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

Check out this [scientific statement](#) from Prof. David M. Hannah on water in a changing environment. It presents a brief overview of how environmental change is influencing our water cycles, highlighting key challenges and the urgent need for action.



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## FRAMEWORK FOR BIODIVERSITY





Environment International

Volume 210, April 2026, 110205



Review article

### Towards a unified framework for biodiversity action in the Triple Planetary Crisis ☆

Jiarui Zhou <sup>a</sup>, Jacopo Cricchio <sup>b</sup>, Francisco Sylvester <sup>c</sup>, Leo Posthuma <sup>d e</sup>, Martin A. Wilkes <sup>f</sup>, Alberto Di Minin <sup>b</sup>, Henner Hollert <sup>c g</sup>, Werner Brack <sup>c h</sup>, Luisa Orsini <sup>a c i</sup>  


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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envint.2026.110205> ↗

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 Open access

We have published a new framework for biodiversity: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envint.2026.110205>.

Tackling the Triple Planetary Crisis requires breaking discipline silos. In this work, we bring together ecology, chemistry, toxicology, data science and economics to propose a new framework to inform decision-making.

This is the first in a series of building blocks underpinning an ambitious and transformative approach to understanding and tackling the biodiversity crisis.

- **Luisa Orsini, Professor of Evolutionary Systems Biology and Environmental Omics**

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## DROUGHT HYDROLOGY: 50 YEARS SINCE 1976

**Wednesday 17th June 2026, Institute of Civil Engineers, One Great George Street, London**

*The meeting will explore the 1976 drought and its relevance today, including what happened, what has changed since, the challenges that remain and possible future solutions.*

The 1976 drought remains one of the most significant hydrological events in UK history, reshaping water management, policy, and public awareness. Fifty years on, this conference uses 1976 as a lens to examine drought resilience in a changing climate. The day brings together researchers and decision makers to revisit what happened, explore advances in water resource management, and assess environmental and societal impacts. Sessions will address climate drivers, planning, and public engagement, before turning to future drought risks and emerging challenges. Through discussion and reflection, the conference aims to identify priorities, strengthen cross-sector collaboration, and inform strategies for securing sustainable water resources.

**Keynote address** from Philip Duffy, CEO, Environment Agency

**Confirmed Speakers** include:

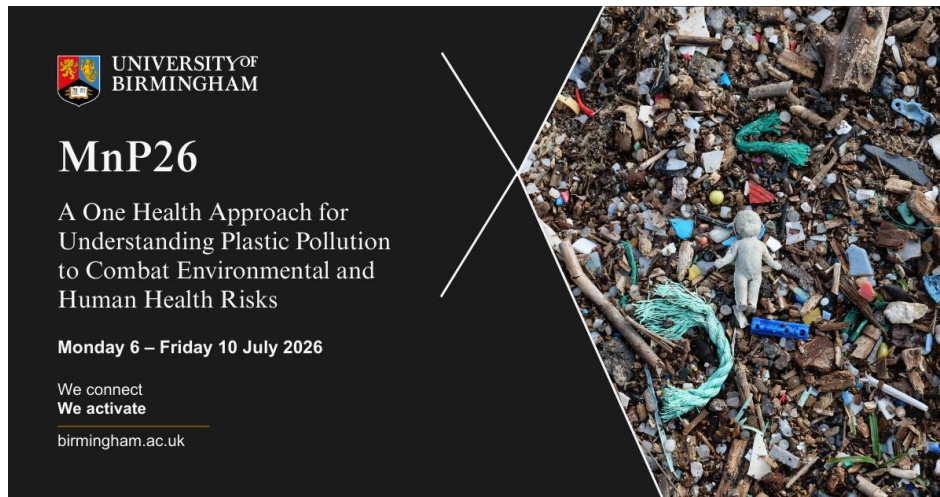
- Helen Wakeham, Director of Water, Environment Agency
- Dr Glenn Watts, Associate Science Director, UKCEH
- Prof David Hannah, Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor, University of Birmingham
- Dr Geoff Darch, Head of Strategic Asset Planning, Anglian Water Services

**Poster abstract submission:** [Drought hydrology: 50 years since 1976](#)

**Registration** (via ICE website): [the 1976 drought and its relevance today | Institution of Civil Engineers \(ICE\)](#)

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MNP26



## Micro - and Nanoplastics Conference 2026 (MnP26)

**Early Bird Registration & Initial Abstract Submission Now Closed**

**A One Health Approach for Understanding Plastic Pollution to Combat Environmental & Human Health Risks**

**Monday 6 – Friday 10 July 2026 | University of Birmingham, UK**

Please note that **Early Bird registration and the initial abstract submission deadline are now closed**. However, there are still opportunities to contribute to MnP26:

### **Further Submission Opportunities**

Submissions are welcome under:

- [Early Career Researcher Registration](#)
- [Standard Registration](#)

### **Poster Presentations**

Poster abstracts will remain open until **31 May 2026**

# Water Challenges in a Changing World

We warmly encourage researchers, practitioners, policymakers, industry partners and students to continue submitting their work and contribute to this interdisciplinary global forum.

Submissions are invited across environmental, human health, societal and governance dimensions of micro- and nanoplastics, including emerging analytical, modelling and cross-disciplinary approaches. Full submission guidelines and the abstract portal are available via the conference webpage.

## Confirmed Programme Highlights

MnP26 will bring together world-leading expertise across science, policy and practice, including plenary lectures from:

- **Dorte Herzke** (NILU)
- **Zhong Huan** (Nanjing University)
- **Chelsea Rochman** (University of Toronto)
- **Tamara Galloway** (University of Exeter)
- **Richard Thompson** (University of Plymouth)

The programme will also feature interactive panels, parallel thematic sessions, early career researcher workshops, and networking forums spanning academia, industry, government and NGOs.

## Arts Programme Highlights

Alongside the scientific programme, MnP26 will feature a dedicated Arts strand, including:

### **My Plastic Life: An audience with PET #1**

A rare appearance by **PET #1**, star of the award-winning production *The Many Lives Of PET #1*, adapted by internationally acclaimed theatre company **Stan's Cafe** from Birmingham Plastics Network research. The project won the **Benefitting Society Award at the Green Gown Awards 2025** and is recognised for its playful yet rigorous approach to public engagement on plastic pollution.

### **Poetry by Lesley Curwen and Stephen Paul Wren**

Poet and former BBC broadcaster **Lesley Curwen**, working with chemist **Stephen Paul Wren**, will present *Permanence* — a poetic exploration of plastic's transformation from wonder material to environmental and health risk. Their science-informed collaboration offers reflective space alongside the conference's core programme.

A banner with a teal background and white text. The background features a blurred, abstract image of water with light reflections. The text is centered and reads "Water Challenges in a Changing World".

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## **Artwork by Olivier Léger**

Artist **Olivier Léger** will display a selection of his work at MnP26, using visual art to open up conversations around plastic pollution, material culture and environmental responsibility. His work invites dialogue and reflection, creating informal spaces for engagement alongside the conference programme.

<https://www.olivierleger.co.uk/>

MnP26 will provide an international platform to advance understanding and develop actionable solutions to global plastic pollution challenges. We look forward to welcoming you to the University of Birmingham in July 2026.

For any conference queries, please email [microplastics2026@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:microplastics2026@contacts.bham.ac.uk)

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HYDRO – ECO 2026



## Ecohydrological Conference 2026 (HydroEco2026)

 **Early Bird Registration – Until 31 May 2026 (11:59 PM UK Time)**

### **Ecohydrology Meets One Health**

Monday 14 – Friday 18 September 2026

University of Birmingham, UK

Due to strong interest, we are pleased to announce an extension of the Early Bird registration deadline for HydroEco2026 — **available until 31 May 2026 (11:59 PM UK Time)**.

Join a global community of researchers, practitioners, policymakers, industry leaders, NGOs, and students at this flagship international conference exploring the vital links between water systems, ecosystems, and human and animal health.

Hosted at the University of Birmingham, HydroEco2026 offers a rare interdisciplinary platform to exchange ideas, spark collaborations, and shape solutions to some of the most pressing water and health challenges worldwide.

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**Final Early Bird Deadline: 31 May 2026 (11:59 PM UK Time)**

 **Register now and submit your abstract: [HydroEco26 Abstract Submission](#)**

Submission guidelines and the submission portal are available on the [conference webpage](#). Register for the conference and submit your abstract here: [HydroEco26 Abstract Submission](#).

## **Why Attend HydroEco2026?**

**Expect a dynamic and engaging programme featuring:**

- **World-leading keynote speakers** driving innovation across ecohydrology, hydrology, environmental science, and public health
- **High-impact panel discussions** tackling the intersections of water, ecosystems, and health — including policy and regulatory insights
- **Cutting-edge research sessions** on hydrological extremes, water quality, climate change, emerging contaminants, and sustainable solutions
- **Hands-on workshops** for early career researchers and professionals, focused on interdisciplinary tools, modelling, and emerging technologies
- **Powerful networking opportunities** to build collaborations across academia, industry, government, and NGOs

## **Key Themes**

HydroEco2026 will explore critical topics including:

- Climate change impacts on ecohydrological processes
- Water and health nexus under the impact of global environmental pressures
- Emerging contaminants and environmental risks
- Hydrology–disease modelling and outbreak dynamics
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)
- Innovative monitoring and modelling technologies
- Citizen science and participatory approaches
- Water conflicts, equity, and justice
- Sustainable and integrated water solutions

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🔒 Secure your place today before the Early Bird deadline closes.

For queries: [hydro-eco2026@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:hydro-eco2026@contacts.bham.ac.uk)

## CATCHMENT SCIENCE SUMMER SCHOOL



### Course Overview

The Catchment Science Summer School is a 5-day short course that is intended for post-graduate students and post-docs interested in a hands-on catchment science curriculum, focusing on northern catchments, runoff processes and combined hydrometric, isotope/chemical tracer and modeling techniques in catchment hydrology. The learning objectives for this short course are to understand:

- Rainfall-runoff processes
- Rainfall-runoff model development, use, and testing
- Hydrochemical and isotopic measurement and analyses
- Linking field experiments with modeling approaches
- Evolution of empirical and theoretical understanding of runoff processes
- Landscape analysis, land-use and climate change impacts on streamflow

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Please note, demand is high for positions on this course, so please secure your spot - [buy a ticket here](#) - or contact [s.hira@bham.ac.uk](mailto:s.hira@bham.ac.uk) to discuss internal journal options.

## PUBLICATIONS

Zhu, H., Khamis, K., Stevens, R., Hannah, D.M. and Krause, S. (2026) **'Continuous in situ monitoring provides new evidence of storm-induced riverine hypoxia following climatic extremes'**, *Limnology and Oceanography*, 71(4), e70361. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1002/lno.70361>

Liu, Q., Eilander, D., Yao, Q., Wu, G., Li, H., Benito, I., Ward, P., Liu, Q., Lu, C., Xu, H., Wang, J., Wright, N., Qiao, F. and Li, M. (2026) **'Projecting compound flood hazards induced by tropical cyclones in Southeast China using MRI-AGCM3-2-S climate model'**, *Journal of Hydrology*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhydrol.2025.134619>

Franca, M.J., Cook, R., Pourzangbar, A., Xia, X., Valero, D., Vanzo, D., Bayón, A. and Wright, N. (2025) **'Why should urban debris dynamics be considered in urban flood management?'**, *Water Resources Research*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1029/2025WR041574>

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## UPCOMING GRANTS

### [NERC - Pre-announcement: Pushing the frontiers of environmental science 2026](#)

Deadline to apply – tbc

Award amount: £950k

Apply for funding to pursue an ambitious, high-reward curiosity-driven project in environmental research.

### [UKRI Translation: Proof of Concept](#)

Deadline to apply: 13/05/2026

Award amount: £100-250k

Apply for funding for research commercialisation activities to develop new products, processes, and services via future venture creation, licensing or other commercialisation routes.

### [ESA – Sustainable Wetlands](#)

Deadline to apply: 15/05/2026

Award amount: €75k

This opportunity invites businesses to submit proposals for space-based applications and services that support wetland sustainability while delivering economically viable business cases. Selected studies can access 75% funding from the European Space Agency, with a maximum of €75,000 per activity.

### [NERC - Independent Research Fellowship 2026](#)

Deadline to apply: 16/06/2026

Award amount: no set limit

Apply for funding to further your career through an independent research fellowship, 5-year fellowships covering fellow's salary, research expenses, and travel costs.

### [UKRI - Future Leaders Fellowships: round 11](#)

Deadline to apply: 16/06/2026

Award amount: £300k to 2M

Apply for funding to support ambitious research and innovation across UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)'s remit. You must be a researcher or innovator who is either looking to establish or transition to independence.

### [EPA Ireland – Research Calls 2026](#)

Deadline to apply 29/06/2026

Award amount: €330-660k

The EPA Research Call 2026 will support innovative research projects to support policy- and decision-making addressing environmental, climate change and sustainability challenges.

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## [Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition 7: Pre-deployment trials](#)

Deadline to apply: 15/07/2026

Award amount: £750k - 1M

Innovate UK, part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), will invest up to £121 million from the Department for Transport in this competition. This is subject to a sufficient number of high quality applications being received.

This funding will be for projects to carry out deployment trials, pre-deployment trials and innovative feasibility studies, each of which forms a separate strand of this competition.

## [EC - MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2026](#)

Deadline to apply: 9/09/2026

Award amount: - relative

MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships enhance the creative and innovative potential of researchers holding a PhD and who wish to acquire new skills through advanced training, international, interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral mobility. MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships will be open to excellent researchers of any nationality.

## [Horizon - Developing methods to assess the presence, functions and sensitivity of groundwater ecosystems](#)

Deadline to apply: 17/09/2026

Award amount: €5-9M

Project results are expected to contribute to all of the following expected outcomes: the knowledge of existing groundwater ecosystems is improved, supporting policymakers and technical experts in assessments of their presence, functions and condition or status, and their role for climate change mitigation; society benefits from enhanced knowledge and awareness of pollution and overexploitation risks to groundwater ecosystems and the ecosystem services provided by them, including of possible implications for other related ecosystems (associated aquatic and dependent terrestrial ecosystems) and for human health as well as for food and water security, disaster risk reduction and resilience building; the EU water policies are supported with new scientific evidence and public authorities are better equipped for setting effective measures for the protection of groundwater biodiversity and their possible links to groundwater-dependent ecosystems.

## [Horizon - Developing managed aquifer recharge techniques \(MAR\) in a rural context](#)

Deadline to apply: 17/09/2026

Award amount: €5-9M

Project results are expected to contribute to all of the following expected outcomes: farmers have access to water supply from managed aquifer recharge systems and to appropriate business models to cope with longer and more intense periods of water scarcity due to climate change, while preserving the good status of ground water

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bodies; water ecosystems are healthier and more resilient to climate change, and water related ecosystem services are protected and strengthened, while water resilience of farming systems is increased;

policy makers are provided with improved insights on mechanisms and instruments to improve the water resilience of the agricultural sector to cope with climate change effect.

## [Horizon - CL6-2026-01-ZEROPOLLUTION - Clean environment and zero pollution: Call 01 - single stage \(2026\)](#)

Deadline to apply: 17/09/2026

Award amount: €10m

Research funded under this destination will support the EU Commission priorities 'Sustaining our quality of life: food security, water and nature' and 'A new plan for Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness'. Proposals for topics under this destination should set out a credible pathway to achieve a clean environment, ensure water resilience, and enable the transformative change necessary to reduce air, water and soil pollution to levels no longer considered harmful to health and natural ecosystems, while respecting planetary boundaries.

### **Open Calls with no closing date:**

#### [NERC: Pushing the frontiers of environmental research](#)

Award amount: £950k

Apply for funding to pursue an adventurous, ambitious, curiosity-driven project in environmental research.

#### [IGB: Leibniz Institute of Freshwater Ecology and Inland Fisheries – Senior Fellows](#)

We invite excellent established scientists to apply for a research visit at IGB. We offer stays for 3 to 12 months to enable senior scientists to contemplate and pursue new inspiring research ideas in collaboration with scientific staff at IGB. At the time of application, successful candidates can be based at institutions in any country worldwide except Germany. Scientists residing in Germany are not eligible to apply, independent of their nationality.

#### [NERC Urgency Fund \(£100k\)](#)

Apply for funding to respond quickly to transient, unexpected environmental research opportunities created by sporadic natural occurrences such as earthquakes, droughts, floods, or ephemeral events in ecosystems.

#### [UKRI – Knowledge Transfer Partnership](#)

Open for business and not-for-profit organisations. Partnerships can last between 12 and 36 months. Business provide one-third to half the project cost depending on their size.

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## [NERC - Work with US-based researchers on environmental science research](#)

Award amount: £300k Apply for funding to work with US-based researchers on an environmental science application. Collaborative work is governed by an agreement between NERC and NSF.

## [Work with Brazilian researchers: NERC FAPESP lead agency](#)

This opportunity allows UK-based researchers and researchers in the State of São Paulo, Brazil to submit a collaborative proposal under existing NERC funding opportunities. This will go through a single review process.

## [UKRI - Collaborate with researchers in Norway](#)

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and Research Council of Norway (RCN) have signed a Money Follows Cooperation agreement to reduce barriers to cross-border collaboration.

## [UKRI - Collaborate with researchers in Luxembourg](#)

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and FNR have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to welcome and support collaborative applications. The MoU provides for a lead agency agreement whereby UKRI will receive and assess joint applications from eligible UK and Luxembourg applicants on behalf of both organisations

## [EPSRC - overseas travel grant: Nov 2023: responsive mode](#)

You can apply for an overseas travel grant in any area within the remit of Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC). We will award 80% of the full economic cost (FEC) of the project.