

TIMETABLE	
8.30 – 9.00 A.M.	Morning coffee / tea
9.00 – 9.15 A.M.	Opening speech by Mrs. Florika Fink-Hooijer, Director-General of the Environment Department of the European Commission
9.15 – 9.30 A.M.	Key-note speech by Prof. Patrick Willems, professor on water engineering at KU Leuven: ‘Changing risks of hydrological extremes’
9.30 – 10.25	<p>Opening Session Theme: outline the future towards a water resilient Europe - searching for accelerators at EU level and at regional level</p> <p><i>Anticipating a forthcoming water resilience strategy or a EU Blue Deal, what level of ambition should be envisioned for this EU Blue Deal? What policy initiatives should be included, which deserve major focus?</i> <i>We aim to gather insights into the future EU water resilience policies, including regional examples, planned initiatives, proposed solution directions, and a clear understanding of the expected level of ambition.</i></p> <p>Moderator: Jan Verheeke (vice chair European Environment and Sustainable Development Advisory Councils Network)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flemish government: Opening speech <i>Mrs. Zuhail Demir, Minister of Justice & Enforcement Environment, Energy, and Tourism</i> - European Economic and Social Committee: Call for an EU Blue Deal: How the EESC lead the way to the Declaration for an EU Blue Deal, and the work ahead <i>Pietro Francesco De Lotto, President of the Consultative Commission on Industrial Change (CCMI) of the European Economic and Social Committee</i> - European Committee of the Regions: Creating an EU Blue deal from an agriculture and rural development perspective across EU Regions <i>Karl Vanlouwe, rapporteur EU Blue Deal European Committee of the Regions</i> - Italian Region Emilia-Romagna: Too less and too much water: building a regional strategy to address this changing environment <i>Paolo Ferrecchi, Director general for Territory and environment, Region Emilia-Romagna</i>



COFFEE BREAK (10.25 – 10.50)	
10.50 – 11.30	<p>Panel discussion: Evidence based pathways to a water resilient Europe: actionable knowledge for decision makers <i>Developing pathways for a stronger water resilience in Europe calls for evidence-based approach that address research and innovation challenges. These pathways should provide actionable knowledge for decision makers, foster solutions for creating a water-smart society and economy. An in-depth exploration of research and innovation queries from European, regional, and sectoral perspectives.</i></p> <p><i>Moderator : Louise Vanysacker (Chair Innovation Working group at Aquaflanders)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction: European Environmental Agency : A preview on the State of Water 2024 report - adapting to water scarcity, drought and flood risk <i>Trine Christiansen , project manager</i> - VITO / VLAKWA: Building blocks for a water research and innovation agenda <i>Dirk Halet, Strategic Coordinator at VLAKWA & Chair Research and Development Platform at Commission Integrated Water Management Flanders</i> - Water Europe The socio-economic study on the value of water <i>Hans Goossens, President Water Europe</i> - BOSAQ Innovative solutions for sustainable and future-proof drinking water and process water production <i>Jacob Bosaer, CEO Bosaq</i> - Ragn-Sells Group: innovation into practice – solutions for the circular transformation of water <i>Pär Larshans, Chief Sustainability Officer</i>
11.30 -11.40	Q&A session
11.40 – 12.10	<p>Panel discussion: Towards a water smart society : water actors and citizens in charge (11.45 – 12.30) <i>Civil society actors identify bottlenecks and suggest possible solutions. Who can or should play which role here? How do we ensure that water security does not become a competitive issue in the internal market, but that water solutions are a European strength.</i></p> <p><i>Civil society actors pinpoint obstacles and propose potential accelerators for a EU Blue Deal. Who ought to assume which roles in this context? How can</i></p>



	<p><i>we safeguard that water security remains a collaborative concern within the EU internal market, while joining forces for the transformation of water solutions into a European forte?</i></p> <p><i>Moderator: Ignace Schops, director RLKM and President BBL</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Europe Water Association: Recognition of the key role of water in Europe and having an integrated approach to water by mainstreaming it into all relevant EU policies <i>Wendy Francken, President</i> - SUMAQUA: Blue Deal buy-in for policy-makers in Flanders experiences gained from the Flemish Blue Deal 1.0 <i>Vincent Wolfs, general manager and business developer</i> - SWECO Water resilience projects in Flanders – Evidence based accelerators for decision makers <i>Isabel Putseys, CSO & Expert Climate & Water planning</i> - Water Coalition / Living Rivers Europe: Call for a new EU Climate and Water Resilience Law to address the climate and water crises <i>Claire Baffert, Senior water Policy Officer - WWF European Policy Office</i>
12.20 – 12.30.	Closing remarks by Mr. Bernard De Potter, Water Director Flanders: Water resilience in a transboundary context
12.30 -14.00	Lunch break
14.00 – 16.00	Boots on the ground: Site visits to demonstration projects on water resilience
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AB INBEV : Water (re)use management at the brewery in Leuven Challenges and solutions at the basecamp of Leuven’s landmark brewery. - Water in the City – Leuven : short city-walk with guide (VMM + Leuven City Council) Discover how in recent years the river Dyle was brought back to the city centre. Nowadays the inhabitants of Leuven can enjoy a. unique water experience.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Visit to JUSTNatureProject (Leuven City Council): This is new Horizon Europe. We plan to visit the temporary installation is part of the JUSTNatureProject, as an excellent example of how NbS, citizen engagement, and circular economy can work together to transition to sustainable and just cities in Europe. - Smart Water control on Campus Arenberg (KU Leuven – Prof. Patrick Willems) At Campus Arenberg water is retained much more efficiently in dry periods by a state-of-the-art control system, and automatically release buffer capacity when heavy rain arrives. In this way, future-proofing the stormwater management of a large part of the campus in one fell swoop. - Mechels Broek: restoring natural wetlands to improve water resilience for city centres (Mechelen - LIFE project Wetlands4Cities <i>(travel by bus to Mechelen – back in Leuven by 17.30)</i>)
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In case your looking for a hotel room in Leuven for the night before the conference, [you can use this form to book](#) at [Martin's Klooster Leuven](#).

