

LIVING WATER CITIES

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND FORUM

LONDON 2026



WELCOME



It is a great pleasure to welcome you to London for the 2026 Living Water Cities Conference.

When we held our first Living Water Cities gathering here in 2019, we brought together people who shared a belief that the waterways running through our cities could be so much more - not simply channels for water, transport or drainage, but vibrant ecological corridors and living places for people and nature. Seven years later, that vision has grown considerably.

Across the world we are seeing extraordinary projects demonstrate what is possible when ecology, engineering, landscape, architecture and community come together. At the same time, the challenges facing our water systems - biodiversity loss, pollution, climate change, flooding and increasing urbanisation - make this work more urgent than ever.

Living Water Cities is therefore about more than greening our waterways. It is about bringing nature back into every stage of the urban water cycle: from catchment to coast, from reservoirs and treatment works to rivers, canals, docks and the hard edges of our cities.

Over two days we bring together an exceptional group of practitioners, designers, engineers, ecologists, water companies, innovators and thought leaders from around the world. We will hear about projects that are already transforming places, explore emerging ideas and technologies and, importantly, create space for conversations between disciplines that do not always have the opportunity to meet.

Our first gathering in 2019 reminded us that Living Water Cities is not the work of any one company, profession or technology. It is a movement that depends upon collaboration.

We hope these two days provide inspiration, provoke new thinking, create new connections and perhaps sow the seeds for projects and partnerships that we cannot yet imagine.

Thank you for joining us on this continuing journey towards cities that are not simply built around water, but are alive with it.

Welcome to Living Water Cities.

Galen Fulford
Founding Director



SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER

09:30 REGISTRATION

10:00 GALEN FULFORD
Welcome

ZACHARY DAMATO
Shaping the Future of our
Urban Waterways: A Wild
Mile Case Study

RUTGER DE GRAAF
From Floating Parks to
Floating Districts: Upscaling
Living Water Cities

MORNING BREAK

ETIENNE ABADIE
Layering Life Beneath the
Surface: Surface Habitats
and Floating Ecosystems

ELS COPORAAL AND
JORINE NOORDMAN
Living Walls, Living Water:
Reimagining Amsterdam's
Quay Walls

13:15 LUNCH

14:00 CHARMAINE DAHLENBURG
From Prototype to Thriving
Ecosystem: The Harbor
Wetland Journey

MORGAN TAYLOR
Measuring the Benefit:
Engineered Habitat Solutions
through the BNG, Natural
Capital and ESG Lens

PETE LEE
Creating the UK's first
Wetland City

IAIN MACGREGOR
Closing Remarks

AFTERNOON BREAK

Please take all belongings with you for the site
visit - we will not return to the venue.

SITE VISIT
Eden Dock

17:15 DRINKS RECEPTION
No. 35 Mackenzie Walk

THURSDAY 24 SEPTEMBER

09:00 REGISTRATION

09:20 GALEN FULFORD
Welcome

ROB ZISETTE
Water Quality Benefits of
Floating Treatment Wetlands

LAURA JASINSKI AND
PABLO BRENES COTO
Building Community and
Ecological Resilience in
Cambridge, MA

MORNING BREAK

GABRIELA DOTRO
New Wetlands, Old Wisdom:
Hybrid Constructed
Wetlands and Engineered
Ecosystems for Stormwater,
Wastewater, and CSO
Management

CHRIS STREB
Ecosystem Infrastructure:
from Water Credits to
Long-Term Frameworks

12:30 LUNCH

13:15 KOEN OLTHUIS
Rise of the Blue City

SKYE HALDANE
The Greenline Project and
Birraring Floating Wetlands:
Reconnecting with
Melbourne's Living River

AFTERNOON BREAK

HARRIET FLETCHER
Designing for Community:
Ilkley Wetland

NICK SCHREINER
Bridging the Gap Between
the Green and the Grey

16:20 GALEN FULFORD
Closing Remarks

OPTIONAL SITE VISITS
Maps Provided

17:30 INFORMAL POST
CONFERENCE DRINKS
Pergola on the Wharf

INFORMATION FROM OUR EVENT CATERERS

Green & Fortune

Main Conference Caterer

*Whilst we take every precaution to accommodate allergies, our kitchen handles nuts and other allergens, and therefore we cannot guarantee a completely nut-free environment. **Guests with severe allergies should make themselves known to the catering team on arrival.***

No. 35 Mackenzie Walk

Drinks Reception Caterer

*All canapés will be accompanied by allergen cards detailing the relevant allergens. **If you have a severe food allergy, please make a member of the No.35 Mackenzie Walk team aware upon arrival.** We will gladly guide you through our menu and prepare a separate dish to remove the possibility of cross-contamination and ensure your dietary requirements are met. If you have any queries, please feel free to ask a team member and we will happily assist.*

SPEAKERS



ZACHARY DAMATO
URBAN RIVERS

Zachary Damato has spent his career on environmental issues, from food waste to healthier consumer food products to river conservation.

In 2009, Zachary co-founded a specialty and organic food distribution company, Norman Distribution Inc. Afterward, he worked as a mentor for Techstars and as a sous chef in Chicago. In 2016, Zachary became COO & co-founder of Niwa (www.getniwa.com), a company that designs software and smart hardware enabling growers to automate their indoor gardens.

In the same year, Zachary co-founded Urban Rivers (www.urbanrivers.org), which transforms urban riverways into wildlife sanctuaries. Their flagship project, the Wild Mile, is the largest floating park in the United States. Currently, Zachary has stepped away from Niwa, joined back full-time with Urban Rivers, and is finishing his M.A. at the Savannah College of Art & Design, focused on sustainable fashion and footwear.



RUTGER DE GRAAF
BLUE21

Dr. ir. Rutger de Graaf is co-founder and director of Blue21, an international company specialised in floating urban development. For more than twenty years he has worked at the interface of civil engineering, urban design, climate resilience and entrepreneurship, helping cities explore how water can become part of the solution to land scarcity, flood risk and urban transformation.

Rutger obtained his PhD cum laude from Delft University of Technology and has contributed to pioneering floating projects, research programmes and policy initiatives in the Netherlands and internationally. He is one of the initiators of Floating Future, a major Dutch applied research programme on floating solutions, and is involved in the development of next-generation floating communities and modular floating platforms.

His work focuses on scaling floating architecture from pilots and individual structures towards safe, investable and climate-adaptive urban districts, with attention to engineering performance, ecology, governance and long-term urban value.



ETIENNE ABADIE
ECOCEAN

Etienne Abadie is the CTO of Ecocean, he has a background in freshwater and marine ecology and biology. Specialising in ecosystem management and restoration, he joined Ecocean's team in 2018 as a project manager.

First deployed in the Netherlands, he worked there two years to develop restoration projects in Belgium, the Netherlands and Denmark. In 2021, he went back to Montpellier, France, in the main office, within the project and scientific team to analyze the ecological data of Biohut, floating wetlands and manage different projects in Northern Europe and continental waters. He has developed key projects with the Dutch Ministry of water, WWF or Brussels port authorities.

SPEAKERS



ELS CORPORAAL AND JORINE NOORDMAN MUNICIPALITY OF AMSTERDAM

Els Corporaal and Jorine Noordman are urban ecologists for the City of Amsterdam. Drawing on their expertise in ecology, nature, and water quality, they work towards creating a healthy, biodiverse, and climate-resilient living environment. In their daily work, they bridge the gap between ecological knowledge and the practical realities of urban development and management, striving for a balance between nature, water quality, and the use of public space.

Both focus on issues at the intersection of ecology and water, paying particular attention to the quality and accessibility -or "experientiability" - of urban waters. They collaborate with colleagues from various disciplines and with external partners to translate knowledge into practical solutions that contribute to a resilient city.

Combining their experience, Jorine and Els bring an integrated perspective to the relationship between nature, water quality, and safe, appealing swimming opportunities within the city. Their work demonstrates how ecology can contribute to both healthy water systems and a city where people and nature reinforce one another.



CHARMAINE DAHLENBURG NATIONAL AQUARIUM

Charmaine Dahlenburg is the Director of Field Conservation at the National Aquarium (Baltimore, MD). She holds a master's degree in environmental science and policy from Johns Hopkins University and brings extensive experience in collaborative, community-based habitat restoration.

In her role, Charmaine serves as a liaison among project partners, government agencies, and volunteers to implement large-scale conservation initiatives. She works closely with organizations including The Nature Conservancy and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as Department of Defense partners and other NGOs.

Charmaine also leads the Aquarium's award-winning Harbor Wetland project, a 8,000-square-foot floating wetland habitat in Baltimore's Inner Harbor, advancing efforts to create a more resilient, ecologically vibrant urban waterfront.



MORGAN TAYLOR GREENGAGE ENVIRONMENTAL

Morgan Taylor MSci (Hons) MCIEEM CEnv leads the nature team at Greengage Environmental Ltd. He specialises in ESG-linked natural capital strategy, biodiverse green infrastructure design and complex ecological assessment for major development schemes.

He was listed on the ENDS Power List 2023 as one of the UK's 100 most influential environmental professionals. He has been instrumental in mainstreaming nature strategy as a part of ESG for UK real estate and has been at the forefront in the evolution of BNG related policy and application. His background in marine biology and subsequent focus on urban biodiversity, planning, policy and green finance places him at a unique intersection of experience to leverage the delivery of urban aquatic ecosystems. He was lead ecologist on the Eden Dock project.

SPEAKERS



PETE LEE
WWT

Pete Lee has worked at WWT, the wetland charity, for five years and is currently in a secondment role developing the charity's 'Wetland's Where You Live' programme of urban wetland projects.

Prior to this, Pete has 15 years' experience in the charity sector with a focus on partnership building, having developed multi-million projects and partnerships across government, philanthropic, and corporate sectors.



IAIN MACGREGOR
ENVOY GROUP

Iain MacGregor is the Founder and CEO of Envoy Group, a Scottish based investment group focused on building and scaling businesses across engineering, infrastructure and technology, with an ethos of empowering talented management teams to achieve their entrepreneurial goals with an emphasis on decentralised management, collaboration and building lasting partnerships.

Iain's investment focus has increasingly included technologies that deliver positive environmental outcomes, from lower-carbon modular water treatment, through the growth in RSE, through to Biomatrix Water, combining engineering with nature-based solutions to improve water quality, restore aquatic environments and bring back amenity to an otherwise heavily industrialised and urbanised environment.

Over his career, Iain has helped build businesses employing more than 8,000 people internationally.



ROB ZISETTE
HERRERA ENVIRONMENTAL
CONSULTANTS

Rob Zisette is an Aquatic Science Principal and senior limnologist at Herrera Environmental Consultants in Seattle, Washington, USA.

Since receiving his M.S degree in water resource management at the University of Washington in 1980, Rob has researched and consulted on a variety of complex surface water projects involving water quality monitoring, stormwater management, lake restoration, aquatic plant management, and floating treatment wetlands. Rob has identified nutrient sources, developed water and nutrient budgets, assessed plankton and aquatic plant communities, and evaluated lake and aquatic plant management techniques for over 40 lakes in Washington State.

Rob developed and implemented state-of-the-art methods for detecting onsite septic system inputs of phosphorus and bacteria to lakes and streams, and conducted contaminated sediment monitoring and remediation projects in urban estuaries. Since working with Biomatrix Water in Ningbo, China in 2008, Rob has promoted the use of floating treatment wetlands for their water quality and habitat benefits and successfully installed three systems in his home state.

SPEAKERS



**LAURA JASINKSI AND
PABLO BRENES COTO**
CHARLES RIVER CONSERVANCY

Laura Jasinski believes that public parks are the heartbeat of civic life - where community, environment, innovation, recreation, and culture collide. She has spent 15 years working in the development and activation of urban open space and community engagement. She has also served as the Associate Director of the Boston Waterfront Initiative for The Trustees of Reservations, an effort to build world-class, resilient open space on the Boston Harbor, and as the Director of Programs and Planning for the Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy where she managed capital improvements, public art installations, and hundreds of public programs.

Laura holds a BA in Architectural Studies and an MA in Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning.

Pablo Brenes Coto has spent most of his professional career working along the Charles River at the Museum of Science and Esplanade Association. As a Park Resilience Project Manager at the Charles River Conservancy, Pablo manages the floating wetland expansion efforts and leads other resilience projects along the river. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science from Wheaton College, MA and is currently pursuing a Master of Science in City Planning at Boston University.



GABRIELA DOTRO
NBS FUTURE | CONSTRUCTED
WETLAND ASSOCIATION

Dr Gabriela Dotro is a PhD-qualified ecological engineer and Nature-based Solutions specialist with over two decades of experience bridging science and engineering practice.

She leads evidence-based consulting through NbS Future, working with water utilities, regulators, and infrastructure managers to design hybrid constructed wetlands and engineered ecosystems that perform as reliable infrastructure.

Her expertise extends across green and grey infrastructure, including activated sludge processes and trickling filters, with a strong grounding in the process science and engineering behind pollutant and emissions cycling in both conventional and nature-based systems.

Gabriela is a Visiting Fellow at Cranfield University and Chair of the Constructed Wetland Association. She is also a certified IUCN Global Standard assessor for Nature-based Solutions, which she has used to support utilities to improve wetland schemes to better align with the NbS vision and avoid greenwashing. She formerly led the IWA Task Group on Mainstreaming Treatment Wetlands (2015–2019), co-authoring two open-access IWA textbooks on the subject. Her work spans multiple countries, with publications translated into several languages and implementations.



CHRIS STREB
BIOHABITATS

Christopher Streb, PE, LEED AP, is Learning and Innovation Leader at Biohabitats, where he has worked since 1999. His practice centers on urban waterfront and tidal ecosystem restoration, living infrastructure, and floating wetland systems. He has been involved in the design and management of floating wetlands since 2010 and has published peer-reviewed work on floating wetland systems and ecomimicry. He holds a U.S. patent for a floating wetland constructed from plastic waste and directs Bioworks, Biohabitats' research and innovation initiative.

SPEAKERS



KOEN OLTHUIS
WATERSTUDIO

With his family roots in shipbuilding, architecture and engineering Dr Koen Olthuis founded Waterstudio in 2003 as the first office 100% focused on floating architecture.

As a senior researcher Floating Cities and Delta Urbanism at the Delft University of Technology, he and his team are testing the strategies and options for The Netherlands to build on water as the next phase in the evolution of a country below sea level.

He advises governments and cities around the world on how to combat the effects of climate change and urbanisation. His signature work includes the Floating City in The Maldives, as well as floating parks, houses and theatre for canals, lakes and the open ocean.

Koen is the author of the book FLOAT! and City Apps, which highlight the possibilities for rich and poor communities to build on water to improve the performance of cities near water. In 2024, The New Yorker featured a profile on Koen and his work in the field of floating developments.



SKYE HALDANE
CITY OF MELBOURNE

Skye Haldane is a landscape architect with over 25 years' experience leading public realm design. She champions inclusive design and strengthening connections to place and Country. At City of Melbourne she is currently working to reconnect the city with Birrarung (Yarra River) in collaboration with Traditional Owners, partners, and community.



HARRIET FLETCHER
STANTEC

Harriet Fletcher is a Technical Director at Stantec, specialising in nature-based treatment solutions for wastewater, storm overflows and catchment water quality improvement.

Harriet provides technical leadership across Stantec's UK and Ireland wetlands portfolio, including schemes for phosphorus, nitrogen, pathogen and stormwater treatment. Her leading role includes overseeing the development of internal tools, design guidance and training for nature-based treatment design.

She has supported nationally significant projects including Ilkley, the UK's first inland bathing water storm overflow wetland, Pontyfelin, the first surface flow wetland on a CSO in the UK, Wooler and Belford phosphorus removal wetlands, and catchment-scale nutrient reduction studies for Northumbrian Water.

A Chartered Engineer and Chartered Water and Environmental Manager, she has more than 21 years' experience in sustainable wastewater treatment. Harriet's work focuses on practical, evidence-led design that connects engineering, environmental regulation and wider catchment outcomes, helping clients deliver resilient, low-carbon solutions that improve river health, biodiversity and community value.

SPEAKERS



NICK SCHREINER
BIOMATRIX WATER

Nick Schreiner is a Water Resource Engineer and Senior Technical Manager at Biomatrix Water. He has a dedicated interest in integrating natural systems with urban infrastructure development.

Since joining in 2020, he has worked with communities and partners to restore biodiversity to urban waterways and reconnect people with the aquatic environment around them. Nick has contributed to the design and development of Biomatrix Water's modular floating wetland systems that replicate and enhance wetland functions for both aquatic restoration and nature-based water treatment infrastructure.

SITE VISITS



EDEN DOCK, CANARY WHARF

Eden Dock is a revolutionary floating park that brings life back to the overlooked spaces between buildings and water. Created through a collaboration between the Eden Project and Canary Wharf Contractors, with floating wetlands designed by Biomatrix Water; Eden Dock reimagines what cities can be.

Across 215 modular units, 16 ecosystems rise from the water, each one designed to support a different range of plants and animals. Integrated benches and walkways invite people to linger, reconnect with the living world in a place where most expect only steel and screens. It's a refuge for wildlife and for people too.

Eden Dock demonstrates how the urban and the green can be seamlessly integrated. Its floating gardens improve water quality, create habitats for birds and pollinators, and turn a once-sterile dock into a living ecosystem.

OPTIONAL SITE VISITS

See map provided to explore floating ecosystem sites across London, from Royal Docks to Graving Docks and beyond

SPONSORS



BIOMATRIX WATER HOST SPONSOR

By integrating ecology and engineering we deliver solutions which build on the power of nature. We create habitats and improve biodiversity, designing beautiful living waterscapes and natural water quality and wastewater treatment solutions which brings water to life.

www.biomatrixwater.com



RSE HEADLINE SPONSOR

RSE is a trusted water technology company solving today's water challenges. From treatment to controls, we design, manufacture and integrate the technologies and systems that keep water moving. Working across municipal and industrial markets, we deliver solutions spanning water and wastewater treatment, chemical dosing, automation, offsite modular build and lifecycle support. Our integrated approach combines specialist engineering, manufacturing and digital expertise to help customers improve performance, resilience and sustainability. Through innovative modular solutions and a commitment to continuous improvement, RSE is transforming how water infrastructure is designed, delivered and managed.

www.rsewater.com



CANARY WHARF GROUP SPONSOR

Canary Wharf Group (CWG) is the developer of the largest urban regeneration project in Europe. CWG develops, manages and currently owns interests in approximately 9 million square feet of mixed-use space and over 1,400 Build to Rent apartments. Canary Wharf's retail offering is ranked the UK's number one shopping destination by Green Street.

CWG is committed to turning sustainability ambition into impactful action. Examples include purchasing 100% electricity from renewable sources since 2012, our partnership with the Eden Project creating a place for nature and people and working to deliver our Science- Based Targets.

CWG has created a 24/7 city where people can live, work and thrive and enjoy all the benefits that Canary Wharf provides: great transport links, access to 16.5 acres of green spaces and waterside living; and a wide range of amenities including an award-winning arts and events programme. Canary Wharf's retail and leisure offer includes over 80 bars, cafes and restaurants and more than 320 shops, including 8 grocery stores, pharmacies and health clubs all within 15 minutes' walk. CWG recorded its highest annual footfall of more than 72 million to its retail malls in 2024.

www.cwg.com



LONDON MUSEUM DOCKLANDS

A Grade I listed quayside warehouse in the heart of Canary Wharf, London Museum Docklands offers a striking backdrop and four centuries of docklands history to the Living Water Cities conference.

London Museum Docklands
No 1 West India Quay
Hertsmere Road
London E14 4AL

www.londonmuseum.org.uk/docklands

USEFUL INFORMATION

Toilets are located just across the foyer area from the catering room, with additional facilities located on the ground floor and in the basement.

WIFI is available - please ask a member of the team.

Smoking is not permitted.

Please note London Museum Docklands is a working museum open to the public.

GETTING THERE

TUBE AND DLR

The nearest stations are **West India Quay** (DLR), **Westferry** (DLR) and **Canary Wharf** (DLR, Jubilee, Elizabeth line). If you're coming in to Canary Wharf station, the best exits are:

DLR North Colonnade
Jubilee Jubilee Plaza
Elizabeth Line Crossrail Place

BUS

Buses 135, 277, D3, D7, D8, N277 and N550 all stop close to the venue.

RIVER BUS

Uber Boat by Thames Clippers, London's River Bus service, stops at Canary Wharf Pier, an 8-minute walk from the venue.

CAR

The closest car park is **West India Quay Car Park** on Hertsmere Road.

CONTACT

In the run up to the conference, you can reach us on:

+44 (0)1309 671866

solutions@biomatrixwater.com

If you have an urgent enquiry on the day(s) of the conference, please contact Ellen on **+44 (0)7970 187812**