CREW CENTRE OF EXPERTISE FOR WATERS

NEWS

Autumn 2026

Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

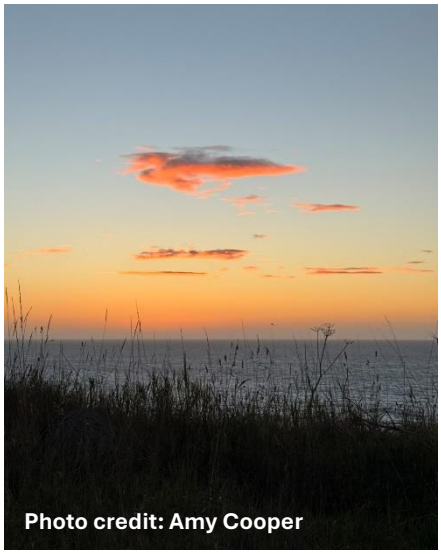

Photo credit: Amy Cooper

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CREW Letter: Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter.

Autumn brings one of my favourite events of the year: the TB Macaulay Lecture. Not only does it promise a thought-provoking talk, this year from Professor Frank Biermann on the future of global environmental governance, but it also brings together one of the most diverse audiences we get to engage with.

From Scotland's water environment and the practical applications of our research to conversations about our career paths, you never quite know who you'll meet or what you'll discuss next!

This year, just before the lecture, I also had the opportunity to visit the National Library of Scotland's Rain exhibition, exploring Scotland's relationship with rain through science, culture and history. It was wonderful to see one of CREW's graphical meeting notes, created by artist Jenny Capon for our *Building Public Health Resilience to Fluvial Flooding in Scotland* project, on display. It's exciting to think of the new audiences our research might reach here.

Connecting with different people, sharing knowledge and finding new ways to engage are themes running throughout this edition of CREW NEWS. We reflect on the events we've attended, the people we've reached and our own continued professional development.

With plenty more activities on the horizon, keep an eye on our LinkedIn for updates!

As always, we hope you enjoy this edition and welcome your thoughts and feedback. Please do get in touch!

Amy Cooper

CREW Impact and Communications Officer

CREW Project Updates

Publication Spotlight: Modelling Sources of Faecal Pollution

A new CREW-funded review explores how modelling can help identify the sources of *E. coli* and other faecal indicator organisms (FIOs) in Scotland's rivers, coastal waters and shellfish-growing areas. The study found that while no single model can effectively capture all pollution sources and pathways, a simple national screening tool, supported by targeted detailed modelling, would provide the most practical approach for identifying pollution risks and supporting regulatory decision-making.

Read the full report and resources: Review of existing faecal indicator organism (FIO) models and future integration opportunities

Workshop Spotlight: Experts Explore Drought Impacts on Scotland's Rivers

Photo credit: Scott Masterton, Getty Images

Experts from across the UK gathered at a CREW workshop led by the University of the Highlands and Islands to examine how prolonged drought affects Scotland's freshwater ecosystems and their ability to recover when river flows return. The discussions highlighted growing concerns over increasing water scarcity, record low river flows, and the challenges drought poses for aquatic plants, fish populations, and overall ecosystem health.

Read the full article: Experts Come Together to Explore the Ecological Impacts of Drought on Scotland's Rivers

Workshop Spotlight: Planning for Scotland's Future Water Demand

How will Scotland's demand for water change in the coming decades? A recent CREW workshop, led by the University of Strathclyde, brought together stakeholders from across sectors to explore future water demand, water availability and the challenges of planning for a changing climate. Discussions highlighted the importance of collaboration, long-term planning and understanding future pressures on Scotland's water resources to help build resilience to increasing water scarcity and drought risk.

Read the full article: Future Water Challenges in Scotland: Preparing for Change

CREW CENTRE OF EXPERTISE FOR WATERS NEWS

Autumn Events!

IWA World Water Congress and Exhibition

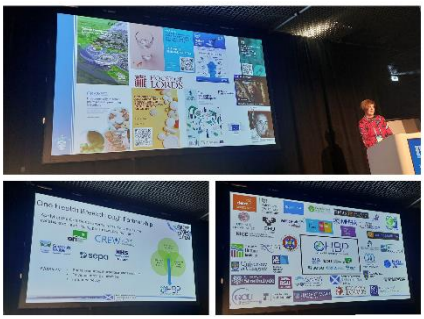
The IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition was held in Glasgow this year, bringing together more than 10,000 people from around the world to discuss the future of water and its role in addressing global challenges. CREW was delighted to be part of the conversation throughout the programme of events.

Kindly hosted by the Hydro Nation Chair Research & Innovation Programme in the Congress Exhibition Space, the CREW team connected with a wide range of international attendees and many familiar faces from our networks. Discussions covered key challenges around water scarcity, flooding, and water quality, highlighting the importance of integrated and adaptive catchment-based approaches to water management.

Professor Sharon Pfleger, NHS Highland Public Health Consultant and cofounder of the One Health Breakthrough Partnership was invited by CREW to give the keynote and chair the One Health Forum at the IWA UK Pavilion in Glasgow. The forum was coordinated by Anglian Water Services and Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water, with support from CREW, The James Hutton Institute and Arup. A key theme of the discussion was the recognition that water sits at the heart of interconnected issues including food security, public health, antimicrobial resistance and climate resilience. The conversations underscored the importance of cross-sector collaboration in tackling these challenges.

Insights from several CREW projects were also shared across the Congress programme by project teams, including work on Household flood plans, AI for flood forecasting, and the Scottish One Health AMR Register (SOHAR).

We would like to thank the Hydro Nation Chair Research & Innovation Programme, the One Health Forum co-ordinators, Sharon Pfleger and all researchers presenting their CREW work for supporting the Centre's participation and promoting CREW outputs at the Congress, as well as everyone who took the time to connect with us and share project insights.



Keep up to date with CREW events, news and updates via our LinkedIn and take a look at our news page for more information.

Glensaugh: Climate Week Northeast

During Climate Week Northeast, CREW joined colleagues at the James Hutton Institute's Glensaugh research farm to explore ongoing work supporting climate-positive farming and share insights from CREW projects.

Photo credit: Andrea Walker

The visit brought together people from a range of backgrounds, including farmers, researchers and the local community, creating an opportunity for engaging and thought-provoking discussions around the opportunities and challenges of climate-positive farming. It was also a great chance to see practical examples of innovative approaches in action and explore how research and collaboration can help support the transition towards more sustainable farming practices.

Doors Open Day at The James Hutton Institute

CREW featured at the James Hutton Institute's Doors Open Day, where visitors explored a range of interactive activities focused on water, the environment and sustainability. Researchers' videos and infographics were displayed in the immersive suite and on digital touch tables, helping to showcase current research and its real-world impacts.

Attendees picked up copies of the CREW Household Flood Plan, while younger visitors designed and coloured their own grab bags (left). Visitors also explored practical guidance on farming and water scarcity, took part in a nature trail quiz, searched for butterflies hidden around the Hutton Hub, and contributed to a collaborative nature mural that will continue to feature at future events.

Building Resilient, Inclusive Communities Through Shared Storytelling (BRICS) and Designing Collaborative Workshops That Produce Results

Recent webinars attended by CREW team members provided valuable perspectives on collaborative approaches to bringing people together to tackle complex challenges. A session led by Ailsa MacKay at the National Centre for Resilience reflected on lessons learned from a recent case study that explored how creative approaches can strengthen community resilience, while Daniela Martin at Fast Track Impact shared insights into how well-designed workshops can foster collective problem-solving. A key takeaway across the webinars was the importance of effective communication and creating space for conversation, helping to build shared understanding and strengthen research impact.

Partnerships in Action: NatureScot at the Hutton Hub

In October, we welcomed NatureScot's North Operations team to The James Hutton Institute's Hutton Hub and Immersive Suite in Aberdeen for a morning of presentations, knowledge sharing and discussion. The sessions brought together colleagues from Aberdeenshire Council, the Dee Catchment Partnership, the North East Scotland Biodiversity Partnership (NESBiP) and CREW to share insights, showcase ongoing work and explore opportunities for collaboration.

Thank you to everyone who joined us and contributed to discussions around nature networks, biodiversity, partnership working, adaptation and water management.

TB Macaulay Lecture highlights

CREW attended the 47th TB Macaulay Lecture, hosted by The James Hutton Institute and the Macaulay Development Trust at the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh. This year's lecture was delivered by Frank Biermann, who explored the future of global environmental governance and highlighted the need for stronger, fairer approaches to addressing environmental challenges through action at both local and global scales.

CREW was also delighted to host an exhibition stand at the event, providing an opportunity to engage with a wide range of attendees from across the environmental and research sectors. Discussions covered Scotland's water environment, the practical application of research and evidence, and career pathways in the sector.

The event provided a valuable platform to showcase CREW's work, introduce our research to new audiences, and explore how our evidence can support decision-making in different contexts. We thank the organisers for a thought-provoking evening, and everyone who visited the CREW stand to learn more about our work.

Register of Expertise

Connecting opportunities and expertise in water science and policy, the Centre of Expertise for Waters (CREW) fosters collaboration between research and decision-making. Our Register of Expertise plays a key role in this effort. Please consider adding your skills and knowledge to the network.

Why should I register

Connect to opportunities

Reach out to colleagues and share your work

Explore skills and find solutions

Widen your network

Register

CREW - Scotland's centre of expertise for waters: Overview | LinkedIn

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For general enquiries and feedback please contact us here: enquiries@crew.ac.uk

The James Hutton Institute

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