



United Nations
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41st session of the IHP Bureau

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FINAL REPORT

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OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The 41st session of the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) was held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris from 26 to 28 March 2008. Mr. Benedito Braga (representing electoral region III – Latin America and the Caribbean), Chairperson, and the following Vice-Chairpersons attended the meeting: Mr. Keizrul Abdullah (region IV – Asia and the Pacific), Mr. Ognjen Bonacci (region II – Eastern and Central Europe), and Mr. Alan Jenkins (region I – Western Europe and North America). Mr. Y.M.O. Nwafor, Deputy Permanent Delegate of Nigeria to UNESCO, represented Region Va (Africa). Mr. Muhammad Al-Rashed (region Vb – Arab States) was unable to attend.

2. It was recalled that following a change in government in Nigeria, Mr. Alhaji Mukhtari S. Shagari, the former Federal Minister of Water Resources, exited Nigeria's cabinet, therefore ceasing his functions as Chairperson of the IHP Intergovernmental Council and as representative of Nigeria to the IHP (July 2006 – September 2007). In accordance with Article IV, item 6(2) of the Rules of Procedure of the IHP Intergovernmental Council, Mr. Braga, then Vice-Chairperson, was designated as Chairperson of the IHP Intergovernmental Council for the unexpired portion (October 2007 – June 2008) of the term of office of the outgoing Chairperson. Mr. Nwafor conveyed the regret of the Nigerian Government that, despite its efforts, a representative was not able to come from Nigeria to the Bureau meeting, but assured the meeting of Nigeria's full support to IHP efforts.

3. Also present at the meeting as observers were: Mr. Gabriel Arduino, Senior Scientific Officer of the Hydrology and Water Resources Department, World Meteorological Organization (WMO); Mr. Arthur Askew, President of the International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS); Mr. Lucio Ubertini, Chairperson of the IHP Finance Committee; and Mr. Geoffrey Prentice, Science Attaché of the Permanent Delegation of the United States of America to UNESCO. Additionally, the following observers were present during the deliberations on agenda item 6.2 on "Proposed category 2 centres": Mr. Luis Chicharo from the University of Algarve, Portugal; Ms Elsa Dominquez, Minister Counsellor of the Permanent Delegation of the Dominican Republic to UNESCO; Ms Patricia Dore Castillo, Counsellor of the Permanent Delegation of the Dominican Republic to UNESCO; Ms Teresa Salado, Attaché of the Permanent Delegation of Portugal to UNESCO; and Mr. Valery Tolmachev, Counsellor of the Permanent Delegation of Kazakhstan to UNESCO. The list of participants is shown in Annex II.

4. Mr. Braga, Chairperson of the IHP Intergovernmental Council, opened the meeting by welcoming the participants. Mr. András Szöllösi-Nagy, Deputy Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences and Secretary of IHP, welcomed the participants on behalf of the Director-General. He also introduced the professional staff of the IHP Secretariat, highlighting that their diverse academic backgrounds reflected the current multidisciplinary nature of the IHP. Mr. Alberto Tejada-Guibert, the Deputy Secretary of IHP, then briefly described the background documentation. He called the attention of the Bureau members to the importance of discussions on key agenda items, such as the relevant outcomes of the 34th session of the General Conference, including the Medium-term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4) and the Programme and Budget for 2008-2009 (34 C/5), particularly as these relate to the implementation of the Seventh Phase of IHP (IHP-VII, 2008-2013); the follow-up actions to the Report of the Overall Review Committee for Major Programmes II and III; the progress on the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the 17th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council (Paris, July 2006); and the review of proposals for the establishment of category 2 water-related centres.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

5. The Secretariat introduced the session's agenda. It was suggested that a new item 10.5 on "Cooperation with non-governmental organizations" be added to the agenda. The Bureau then adopted its agenda, as amended, which is reproduced in Annex I of this report. The documents made available for the session are listed in Annex III.

REPORT ON THE 34TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE AND ON THE 177TH AND 178TH SESSIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNESCO, INCLUDING OVERVIEW OF THE MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGY FOR 2008-2013 (34 C/4) AND THE PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2008-2009 (34 C/5)

6. The Secretariat presented an overview of the decisions on water-related issues of the 34th session of the UNESCO General Conference and of the 177th and the 178th sessions of the Executive Board as well as the water and IHP related components within the Medium-term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4) and the Programme and Budget for 2008-2009 (34 C/5), as summarized in document IHP/Bur-XLI/6. The Bureau took note that, during the Director-General's Regional Consultative Meetings of National Commissions for UNESCO, as well as at the sessions of the General Conference and the Executive Board, many Member States strongly supported water as a key priority for UNESCO. It noted that the work developed during the Sixth Phase of IHP (IHP-VI, 2002-2007) and, in particular, the forthcoming implementation of the strategic plan for the Seventh Phase (IHP-VII, 2008-2012) will strongly contribute to the firm establishment of UNESCO's leadership role within the United Nations system with regard to freshwater activities, as foreseen in document 34 C/4.

7. The Bureau, however, expressed concern that while document 34 C/5 continues to include freshwater as a priority for Major Programme II (Natural Sciences), it also defines two other more general biennial sectoral priorities for the Natural Sciences, thus freshwater no longer holds the status as principal priority. In addition, the Bureau expressed deep concern that the reduction of the budget allocated to IHP during the current biennium will negatively affect UNESCO's capacity to effectively address freshwater issues at a time when their critical relevance for development and human security is being recognized and strongly stressed at the international level. It likewise noted that the recommendations of the Review Committee for Major Programme II and III (see paragraph 8 below and document IHP/Bur-XLI/7) had a definite impact on documents 34 C/4 and 34 C/5 unlike the letter the Chairperson of the Bureau had sent to the Director-General on behalf of the whole Bureau during the previous session. The Bureau, therefore, called for support of the national delegations of the respective regions they represent to voice concern regarding to the budgetary situation of IHP to the governing organs of UNESCO. It also recommended that the forthcoming 18th session of the IHP Council (June 2008) consider a recommendation for the 35th session of the General Conference, with a view to maintaining UNESCO's strong capacities and lead work on freshwater to the benefit of Member States.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE REPORT OF THE OVERALL REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR MAJOR PROGRAMMES II AND III

8. The Secretariat presented recent developments on the follow-up to the report of the Overall Review Committee for Major Programmes II and III, including the Implementation Plan and budgetary consequences. The Implementation Plan for UNESCO's science programmes (Annex to document 34 C/13) *'seeks to show how the recommendations made by the Review Committee, along with the Director-General's comments (i) have been taken into account in the Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4); (ii) are addressed in its various overarching objectives and strategic programme objectives; and (iii) are to be implemented and built upon in the coming years as a continuing process, in successive C/5 documents during the six-year period.'*

9. The position of the IHP Bureau regarding the implementation plan, as expressed in a letter from the Chairperson of the IHP Intergovernmental Council to the Director-General in June 2007 (Annex I of document IHP/Bur-LI/7), was recalled again when considering the above-mentioned Implementation Plan. The Bureau is of the view that IHP, by the very nature of its mandate, governance and operational procedures, already satisfied the relevant recommendations, particularly through the formulation and execution of its six-year phases and that the application of additional recommendations would prove detrimental to IHP in terms of its efficiency, functioning

and capacity to deliver. These matters have been appropriately raised in the aforementioned letter to the Director- General.

10. In this regard, the Bureau unanimously decided to prepare a statement, emphasizing the critical importance of freshwater, IHP's role in addressing freshwater issues and the relevance of the Review Committee's recommendations for consideration and adoption by the IHP Intergovernmental Council and subsequently for submission to the governing bodies of UNESCO. The statement should note the efficient use of the regular budget by IHP and its success in obtaining extrabudgetary funds as a complement to seed funding from regular sources. The Bureau expressed its deep concern that two months after the approval of the Programme and Budget for 2008-2009 (34 C/5) by the General Conference, the budget of IHP was subjected to a cut without any prior consultation. The Bureau also noted that this budget cut is to be partially restored to IHP via extrabudgetary sources through a contribution from the Japanese Funds-in-Trust as decided by the Director-General.

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS AND OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED BY THE 17TH SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL OF IHP

11. The Secretariat reported on the follow-up to the resolutions adopted in the 17th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council. The Bureau noted with satisfaction the progress made in their implementation.

12. The Bureau re-examined the issue of IHP governance (Resolution XVII-8), and concluded that no significant convergence has been achieved with regard to potential changes in the IHP governance mechanisms among the views held in the different regions. It underscored the need to strengthen IHP National Committees. The Bureau deemed that it would not be productive to engage anew in the discussion of the IHP governance in the next session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council as this issue has been addressed by the IHP Intergovernmental Council for over a decade without significant progress, hence it recommended that the corresponding item not be included on the provisional agenda of the 18th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council and the debate on this issue is not to be resumed until a new consensual approach emerges. The Bureau also recommended that the linkage between the IHP National Committees and UNESCO Field Offices with Regional Hydrologists, or other freshwater specialists, be enhanced.

13. Regarding Resolution XVII-9, the Main Lines of Action for UNESCO's Draft Programme and Budget for 2008-2009, the Bureau recommended that during 2008-2009, the first biennium of IHP-VII, emphasis in the programme execution should be put on the following four priority topics: groundwater, hydrology and water management in arid and semi-arid zones, urban water systems and relevant issues related to climate change/variability. The recommendation was made with the understanding that the priority areas would be re-examined for the next biennium. The Bureau acknowledged the cross-cutting nature of climate change and the Secretariat noted that climate change is addressed in the context of global changes under Theme 1 of IHP-VII. The Bureau also noted in this regard that climate variability and change had been a matter of concern for IHP since the very inception of its 4th Phase, i.e. since 1990.

14. The decisions concerning UNESCO-IHE and UNESCO category 2 water-related centres were considered and reported on under the respective agenda items.

UNESCO'S WATER-RELATED CENTRES (CATEGORY 1 AND CATEGORY 2)

Cooperation of the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education (category 1) with UNESCO-IHP

15. The Bureau took note of the results of the external evaluation of UNESCO-IHE and the recent developments towards the renewal of the Operational and Cooperation Agreements. The Bureau highlighted that the proposed Tertiary Water Education Grants Programme, prepared at the request of the Bureau at its 40th session, has an enormous potential to strengthen the link between IHP and UNESCO-IHE and will constitute an excellent resource to raise the capacities of human resources working on water resources in Member States. The Bureau endorsed the proposal and requested that the IHP Intergovernmental Council consider it in order to make the programme operational for the forthcoming 2008/2009 academic year. The Bureau instructed the Secretariat to finalize the draft text, in cooperation with the relevant central services of UNESCO, for submission to the 18th session of the Intergovernmental Council. The Bureau noted that the rules of the programme should not exclude potential cooperation with category 2 centres. Additional aspects of the IHE work plan to strengthen collaboration with other UNESCO bodies, in particular IHP, as recommended by the external evaluation of IHE, were discussed under agenda item 9.2.

Proposed category 2 centres

16. The Bureau considered the proposals for new water-related category 2 centres as indicated in document IHP/Bur-XLI/10 in compliance with the newly adopted IHP strategy for UNESCO category 2 water-related centres. The Bureau endorsed in principle the proposal received from Portugal to establish an International Centre for Coastal Ecohydrology and Climate Change, but recommended that its scope of work, as well as the title of the centre, be adjusted so as not to restrict activities of the proposed centre to only climate change and suggested that other factors, such as anthropogenic factors, need to be considered. A Bureau member also raised a concern regarding the need to link the work of the proposed centre with the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO as well as with the European Regional Centre for Ecohydrology, a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO. Thus this proposal would be forwarded to the forthcoming 18th session of the IHP Council with due regard to the above comments by the Bureau.

17. The Bureau welcomed and endorsed the proposal of the Republic of Kazakhstan to establish a Central Asian Regional Glaciological Centre. Likewise, the Bureau endorsed the proposal for a Centre for the Sustainable Management of Water Resources in the Caribbean Island States in the Dominican Republic. It was noted that this centre received the endorsement of the 7th regional meeting of the IHP National Committees and Focal Points of Latin America and the Caribbean – Region III (Guatemala City, August 2007). The Bureau then reviewed and endorsed the proposal of the United States of America for the establishment of an International Centre for Integrated Water Resources Management (ICIWaRM) that would be hosted by the Institute for Water Resources of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and be set up in partnership with a consortium of U.S. universities and professional organizations. It was noted likewise that the latest regional meeting of IHP National Committees of Western Europe and North America – Region I (Istanbul, September 2007) gave its support to this U.S. proposal. Accordingly, the three above-mentioned proposals shall be forwarded to the forthcoming 18th session of the IHP Council.

18. With regard to the proposal for the establishment of a Centre for Water Science and Hydropolitics (Sweden) presented by the Stockholm University, the Bureau noted that the proposal was not yet in full conformity with the relevant rules and regulations adopted by the IHP Intergovernmental Council and the 178th session of the Executive Board of UNESCO, and invited the appropriate authorities of the Swedish Government to formally submit it to the IHP Secretariat. The Bureau also noted that several elements of the proposal needed to be further specified. Under

these circumstances, and given the tight timeframe until the 18th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council, the Bureau recommended the re-submission of a revised proposal through official channels to the IHP Secretariat by no later than 1 May 2008, for an out-of-session decision by the Bureau on whether to transmit it to the 18th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council for their consideration.

Overview of recently-approved category 2 centres

19. The Secretariat presented an overview of the status of five category 2 water-related centres already approved by the governing organs of UNESCO: Regional Centre on Urban Water Management for Latin America and the Caribbean, Colombia (agreement between UNESCO and the Government of Colombia signed in September 2007); International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre (IGRAC), The Netherlands; Regional Centre for the Management of Shared Groundwater Resources, Libya (agreement between UNESCO and the Government of Libya signed in February 2008); Regional Centre for Water Management Research in Arid Zones, Pakistan; IHP International Centre of Water for Food Security at Charles Sturt University, Australia; and International Hydroinformatics Centre for Integrated Water Resources Management, Brazil-Paraguay. The Bureau noted the progress made by these centres, but at the same time, while understanding the specific circumstances, expressed its concern over the excessively long time interval that in some specific cases it takes to establish centres after their approval by the IHP Intergovernmental Council.

20. The Bureau also noted the importance of regular reporting by the centres, and emphasized the need to reinforce one of the recommendations in the strategy for UNESCO's category 1 and category 2 water-related institutes and centres, namely, for the directors of institutes and centres to submit periodic reports on their centres' activities to the IHP Intergovernmental Council and to the IHP National Committee of the host country. In this regard, the Bureau asked the IHP Secretariat to develop a template for a short (2 to 3 pages) report to be submitted by the centres, based on which the Secretariat can report to the Bureau session preceding the IHP Intergovernmental Council. The Bureau will then submit a summary report on the status of the various centres to the Council for its consideration. It was noted that, within this procedure, reports should also be made available on centres that are not operational, and reasons should be provided as to why they are not in operation.

21. The Bureau also emphasized the importance of strengthening linkages between the centres and the IHP National Committee of the host country, and suggested that the reporting mentioned above could be done either through, or with the involvement of, the IHP National Committee.

Strategy for UNESCO's category 1 and category 2 water-related institutes and centres

22. The Secretariat provided background information leading up to the approval of the strategy for UNESCO's category 1 and category 2 water-related institutes and centres, followed by an overview of how the strategy has been implemented, namely, that both the review of an existing centre and proposals submitted by four of the five new centres discussed by the Bureau followed the guidelines set in the strategy.

23. The Bureau considered the terms of reference for the review of existing centres, as outlined in the strategy. It stressed the importance of carrying out the review of those centres, whose agreements between UNESCO and the host government have expired, or are soon to expire, as well as the need to have these reports made available to the Bureau.

24. The Bureau noted with satisfaction that the strategy for UNESCO's category 1 and category 2 water-related institutes and centres has been formally acknowledged by the governing organs of UNESCO, and that elements of the strategy for water-related centres were reflected in documents

relating to UNESCO's general guidelines for category 2 centres prepared for the latest sessions of the Executive Board of UNESCO.

REVIEW OF IHP-VI ACTIVITIES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES OF UNESCO

Results of IHP-VI implementation since the 17th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council

25. The Secretariat reported on the implementation of the Sixth Phase of IHP (IHP-VI, 2002-2007), highlighting results of IHP-VI activities and projects carried out since the 17th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council covering the period from June 2006 to December 2007, as well as major achievements for the entire period of IHP-VI (2002-2007).

26. The representative of WMO clarified that the joint UNESCO-WMO training workshops on assessment of national capabilities for the evaluation of water resources targeted some – not all – countries of the LAC region due to different regional groupings of the WMO and UNESCO.

27. Regarding the cross-cutting initiative on Hydrology for the Environment, Life and Policy (HELP), the Bureau identified the need to improve institutional linkages between HELP, as an IHP initiative, and IHP itself and requested that a report on the activities and status of HELP be submitted by the Secretariat to the 43rd session of IHP Bureau with a view to reviewing its scope and improved implementing, coordinating and reporting mechanisms.

28. The Bureau acknowledged the substantial work carried out by the global network G-WADI on Water and Development Information for Arid Zones and commended it as a successful contribution to sustainable management of water resources in arid and semi-arid areas.

29. The Bureau endorsed with satisfaction the progress achieved in implementing the Sixth Phase of IHP. It recommended that the document be submitted to the 18th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council with minor revision. It was suggested that the major achievements of IHP-VI Themes be presented in a style which more clearly reflects the results and outcomes vis-à-vis the objectives set out in the IHP-VI plan. The Bureau also noted that collaboration with other international scientific programmes, organizations and initiatives need to be highlighted in the report. The Bureau has recommended that, as the Sixth Phase has successfully been implemented, a comprehensive report should be compiled and published on the major results and achievements prior to the 35th session of the General Conference of UNESCO.

IHP-related extrabudgetary activities

30. The Bureau welcomed the significant progress made during the last biennium (2006-2007) in obtaining major extrabudgetary contributions to IHP provided by bilateral donors and agencies; in particular, the support received from the governments of Italy and Japan, and the Flemish Community of Belgium. The Bureau welcomed the cooperation between IHP and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and encouraged the IHP Secretariat to continue its cooperation with GEF. The Bureau noted the significance that the achievement of the status of GEF Executing Agency 'under expanded opportunities' would hold for UNESCO and IHP in particular. It recommended to the IHP Intergovernmental Council to consider appropriate measures to facilitate this process. The Bureau called for the support of IHP National Committees in coordinating with the corresponding national representatives in the GEF Council with respect to the consideration of this item in the GEF Council agenda.

31. The Bureau viewed with concern the present practice regarding overheads. The Bureau proposes that a great deal more flexibility needs to be exercised in establishing overheads, reflecting the actual costs of managing those funds. It was also noted that new mechanisms within the framework of UNESCO administrative policy need to be explored for the application of

overhead expenses of extrabudgetary projects in general, and particularly in cases concerning the utilization of those funds from multi-national agencies such as GEF, where specific requirements need to be met. The Bureau took note that the preparation and implementation of extrabudgetary projects increases considerably the workload of the IHP Secretariat staff involved.

Cooperation with other UNESCO environmental programmes

32. The Secretariat reported on the cooperation of IHP with other UNESCO international programmes devoted to various aspects of sustainable development as well as with other Sectors of UNESCO. The Bureau noted with appreciation these developments. It emphasized that IHP should continue cooperating with other environmental and science programmes of UNESCO, where appropriate, in areas of IHP's mandate. The Bureau also noted that IHP resources should not be used to finance activities that lie outside the scope of IHP.

IMPLEMENTATION OF IHP-VII: FOCUS FOR 2008-2009

33. The Secretariat reported to the Bureau on the planned methods in which the contributions and activities proposed by the IHP National Committees will be collected and recorded. UNESCO's Chairs and Centres have been included in the process of the preparation of the implementation plan. The Bureau took note that the output of these consultations will be reported on at the 18th session of the IHP Council.

34. The Secretariat is also currently redesigning the IHP website and its layout in order to more clearly reflect the themes, focal areas and activities of IHP-VII. This is expected to enable the IHP National Committees to monitor and have direct access to the information on the implementation of IHP-VII activities, as well as to present the achievements and products of IHP-VII.

PROGRESS REPORT ON RECENT IHP INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMMES

Water and Cultural Diversity

35. The Secretariat reported on background information and activities implemented and planned for this new project on Water and Cultural Diversity, which falls under Focal Area 2.1, Theme 2 of IHP-VII. The Bureau welcomed this initiative. In response to a comment from the Bureau concerning the project, the Secretariat highlighted that development of manuals and guidelines to incorporate cultural factors for infrastructure development, to be used by planners, is indeed one of the long-term outputs foreseen for the project.

IHP's role in the Thematic Programme on Education for Sustainable Water Management of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD, 2005-2014)

36. The Secretariat reported on recent developments on the thematic programme on education for sustainable water management of the DESD, stressing the need to enhance water education worldwide and highlighting the collaboration with UNESCO-IHE, UNESCO category 2 water-related centres and Chairs, and other UNESCO Sectors, in particular the Education Sector. Concerning the foreseen global assessment of water education needs that would be performed in close collaboration with UNESCO-IHE and in consultation with IHP National Committees, the Bureau noted the potential usefulness of this assessment in collecting information about the current status of freshwater education. It was also noted that the needs assessment could take into account the framework presented in the WMO-UNESCO Water Resources Assessment – Handbook for Review of National Capabilities. The Bureau discussed potential benefits of a strong involvement of the IHP National Committees in this process and requested the Secretariat to present a document on the needs assessment to the next session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council.

37. The Secretariat also reported on the regional workshops on water education planned for 2008, with the objective of compiling examples of best practices on water education at all levels, to foster links between different levels of education and to obtain recommendations for the strengthening of water education.

IHP involvement in the UNESCO Strategy on Climate Change

38. The Secretariat reported on the UNESCO Strategy on Climate Change, based on the work of the UNESCO Task Force on Global Climate Change created in June 2007 by the Director-General. The major purpose of the Task Force is to define a strategic and integrated approach for UNESCO on the issue of global climate change so that it can make a tangible contribution in the years to come. IHP is actively involved in the inter-sectoral platform on climate change, having been one of its fields of endeavour since IHP-IV. Within the framework of IHP-VII, several focal areas address the impacts of global changes on river basins and aquifer systems. The Bureau noted these developments with appreciation.

Preliminary concept paper: Proposal for a UNESCO-IHP initiative on ‘World Water Sites’

39. The Secretariat introduced a preliminary concept paper on a new IHP initiative on “World Water Sites” which was developed by members of the Steering Committee of the Ecohydrology Programme that aims to provide recognition to sites with innovative and participatory watershed management. The Bureau agreed that the ideas presented in this preliminary concept paper had strong potential, and invited the Steering Committee to further develop this initiative. While recognition of innovation is important, the Bureau expressed its concern over the recognition of sites, as it is the management of sites – in contrast to the sites themselves - that affects their sustainability, as well as regarding the permanence of the sites so recognized. The Bureau suggested that the concept be further developed, including the elaboration of the process and criteria for selecting sites, the mode of recognition (e.g., an award of a limited duration or a permanent list of recognition), and legal framework, and requested that a more elaborate proposal be submitted to the 43rd session of the IHP Bureau.

RELATIONS WITH UNITED NATIONS AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Cooperation with UN System on freshwater issues

40. The Secretariat reported on IHP’s cooperation with United Nations programmes, agencies and initiatives within the UN system dealing with freshwater issues, with special focus on IHP contribution to UN-Water and highlighting that the cooperation within UN-Water member organizations has been strengthened substantially during the past years.

41. The Bureau took note of IHP cooperation with members of UN-Water. The Bureau noted that IHP jointly with UNECE is the agency responsible for the World Water Day 2009 with the theme *transboundary waters*. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to inform the IHP Council of this matter with the aim of ensuring the involvement of the IHP National Committees in the preparation and global celebration of the Day. World Water Day 2009 will be the object of a celebratory event at the 5th World Water Forum to be held in Istanbul.

Cooperation between IHP and the UN World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP)

42. The Secretariat reported on IHP's cooperation with the UN World Water Assessment Programme. IHP is actively involved in the preparation of the third edition of the World Water Development Report (WWDR) "Water in a Changing World"; IHP is coordinating the production of the chapter on "The State of the Resource". The Report will be presented by the Director-General of UNESCO, on behalf of the UN-system, at the 5th World Water Forum in Istanbul, Turkey on 16 March 2009 immediately following the opening ceremony. IHP is additionally contributing to WWDR side publications on various topics, including droughts, floods glaciers and conflict resolution.

43. The Bureau invited IHP National Committees to contribute to WWAP and to disseminate WWDR results and reports.

UNESCO-IHP involvement in the 5th World Water Forum

44. The Secretariat reported on the 5th World Water Forum and on IHP's involvement in the preparation of 5th Forum activities. The Bureau welcomed UNESCO's role in the Forum, in particular as Coordinator for Theme 6 'Education, Knowledge and Capacity Building'. In addition, it was noted that IHP is actively contributing to the technical programme of the following topics under Theme 6: Topic 6.1 on 'Education, Knowledge and Capacity Development Strategies', coordinated by UNESCO-IHE; and Topic 6.2 on 'Water Science and Technology', coordinated by IHP. It was also noted that under this theme, two new topics were added: Topic 6.4 on 'Data for All', coordinated by IAHS and WMO; and Topic 6.5 on 'Water and Culture', introduced at UNESCO's request and coordinated by IHP.

45. The Secretariat reported that IHP is the coordinator of Topic 3.1 on 'Basin Management and Transboundary Water Cooperation' under Theme 3 'Managing and Protecting Water Resources'. The Bureau recommended that IHP should also contribute to groundwater-related sessions, in particular Topic 3.4 on 'Managing and Protecting Surface, Ground and Rainwater'.

46. The Secretariat also reported on IHP's contribution to the preparation of the political process of the Forum, whose main objectives aim at setting up a mechanism for dialogue between politicians, scientists and stakeholders.

IHP's role in the International Decade for Action – Water for Life (2005-2015)

47. The Bureau took note of the contributions made by IHP to the International Decade for Action "Water for Life" 2005-2015 and expressed at the same time some concern over the current status of the Decade.

Cooperation with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

48. The representative of WMO informed the meeting about the present status of the preparation of the 3rd edition of the UNESCO/WMO International Glossary of Hydrology. After the 17th session of the IHP Council, the indexes in French, Spanish and Russian languages were prepared; this allowed identifying and removing some inconsistencies. The 8th and last session of the UNESCO/WMO Standing Committee on Terminology was held in Geneva in March 2007. The meeting was informed that UNESCO is working on obtaining the Spanish version that is still due.

Cooperation with non-governmental organizations

49. The representative of the International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS) expressed his pleasure at the continued close co-operation between his Association and UNESCO. He recorded his thanks to UNESCO for the support it had given to IAHS meetings held

during the IUGG Assembly in Perugia, Italy in July 2007 and for the digitization of past IAHS publications that had made it possible to save them for posterity and make available as open access files on the Association's web site. He referred to the continued collaboration on the preparation of a compendium of large floods, the International Glossary of Hydrology and IFI. He drew attention in particular to the forthcoming Kovacs Symposium and preparations for the 5th World Water Forum as examples of future collaborative efforts and informed the Bureau of plans for a Joint IAHS/IAH International Convention that would be held in Hyderabad, India from 6 to 12 September 2009.

50. The Bureau expressed its support to the IAHS initiative on the Joint IAHS/IAH International Convention and invited the Secretariat to consider the provision of various forms of support during the review of the 2009 IHP working budget.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE 18TH SESSION OF THE IHP INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL

Recommendations by the IHP National Committees of Region I (Western Europe and Northern America) to the IHP Bureau for improving the running operations of the IHP Intergovernmental Council sessions

51. Region I suggested that the Kovacs Colloquium could be instrumental as a platform for IHP themes, cross-cutting programmes and initiatives. The representative of IAHS noted that the theme of the 9th Kovacs Colloquium was endorsed by the Bureau at its last session and that the IHP secretariat could, in the future, propose topics that are closely related to the IHP-VII Strategic Plan and that could as well respond to the scientific interests of IAHS.

52. The Bureau invited the Secretariat to work out different options for reformatting the proceedings of the Intergovernmental Council, with a view to enriching the scientific content and to make the sessions more appealing from a technical point of view. Several possibilities were explored, such as having internationally recognized IHP experts make summary presentations of IHP themes, initiatives and cross-cutting programmes, and looking into the potential role of category 2 water-related centres and UNESCO chairs in presenting a theme or an initiative. The Bureau noted, however, that it would be not feasible for the upcoming Intergovernmental Council to change the format, but should be considered for the 19th session of the Council in 2 years time. The Secretariat will submit an overview of various options to the 43rd session of the Bureau.

Kovacs Colloquium

53. Highlighting the long-standing collaboration with IAHS, the Secretariat reported on the preparation of the 9th Kovacs Colloquium, jointly organized by IHP and IAHS prior to the next session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council. It was noted that the Colloquium will be held under the theme 'River Basins: from Hydrological Science to Water Management'.

Amendment of Article IV (Officers) of the Rules of Procedure of the IHP Intergovernmental Council

54. The Bureau Members considered the Rules of Procedure of IHP in connection to the fact that the Chairperson elected at the 17th session of the IHP Council had ceased to represent a State member of the Council, ceasing therefore his role as Chairperson. The Bureau was informed that following the IHP rule of procedure 6.(2) and in consultation with the legal officer of UNESCO, a vice-chairperson of the IHP Council assumed the post of Chairperson for the unexpired portion of the term in office. While recognizing that the Rules of Procedure did not address explicitly the handling of the above case, it considered that due to its exceptional occurrence it did not warrant embarking in a process of modifying the current Rules of Procedure. It further saw no need to modify the current practice whereby the Chairperson is elected on the basis of a regional rotation, thereby maintaining an equitable geographic representation.

OTHER MATTERS

55. The Secretariat noted that the terms of office of some members of the Governing Boards of UNESCO category 1 (UNESCO-IHE) and those of several category 2 water-related centres will expire and that new members need to be elected by the 18th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to send a circular letter to the IHP National Committees of the regions concerned requesting nominations by 15 May 2008. The recommendations for the IHP Intergovernmental Council will be established by the Bureau through an out-of-session consultation.

56. With respect to the officers to be elected at the next session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council, the Bureau recommended that the regions consider a balanced representation, or rotation, of the countries in the respective regional groupings in the nominations of the Vice-Chairs of the IHP Intergovernmental Council as well as for the posts of Chair of the IHP Finance Committee and of the Resolutions Committee.

57. The Bureau recalled that the rules and procedure for submitting draft resolutions of the IHP Intergovernmental Council, as endorsed by the 39th session of the Bureau, should be applied. The Bureau requested the IHP National Committees to follow the relevant IHP rules and procedure and the required timeframe.

58. Within the framework of ongoing developments on the communication strategy of IHP, the Bureau took note of the new corporate image for all IHP publications, including brochures, reports, technical documents and books. The Bureau endorsed the corporate image and encouraged that it should be used, with appropriate modifications if needed, for all IHP publications, including those produced by the UNESCO regional and field offices.

59. The revised provisional agenda for the 18th session of the Intergovernmental Council of the IHP was discussed and approved by the Bureau (see Annex IV). The session will be held at UNESCO headquarters in Paris from 9 to 14 June 2008.

60. The Bureau endorsed the nomination of Mr. Roberto Pizarro, University of Talca, Chile, to the ISI Steering Committee as representative of the LAC region.

APPROVAL OF THE FINAL REPORT AND CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

61. The Bureau reviewed and approved the final report of its 41st session. Mr. Braga, the Chairperson of the IHP Intergovernmental Council, thanked the members of the Bureau and observers for their participation, as well as the Secretariat for the efficient preparation and support for the meeting, including the finalization of the report. He then brought the meeting to a close at 12:45 PM on 28 March 2008.

ANNEX I

AGENDA

1. Opening of the session
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Report on the 34th session of the General Conference and on the 177th and 178th sessions of the Executive Board of UNESCO, including overview of the Medium-term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4) and the Programme and Budget for 2008-2009 (34 C/5)
4. Follow-up to the Report of the Overall Review Committee for Major Programmes II and III
5. Review of the implementation of the resolutions and other recommendations adopted by the 17th session of the Intergovernmental Council of IHP
6. UNESCO's water-related centres (category 1 and category 2)
 - 6.1 UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education (category 1)
 - 6.2 Proposed category 2 centres
 - 6.3 Overview of recently-approved category 2 centres
 - 6.4 Strategy for UNESCO's category 1 and category 2 water-related institutes and centres
7. Review of IHP-VI activities and related activities of UNESCO
 - 7.1 Results of IHP-VI implementation since the 17th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council
 - 7.2 IHP-related extrabudgetary activities
 - 7.3 Cooperation with other UNESCO environmental programmes
8. Implementation of IHP-VII: Focus for 2008-2009
9. Progress report on recent IHP initiatives and programmes
 - 9.1 Water and Cultural Diversity
 - 9.2 IHP's role in the Thematic Programme on Education for Sustainable Water Management of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD, 2005-2014)
 - 9.3 IHP involvement in the UNESCO Strategy on Climate Change
10. Relations with United Nations and non-governmental organizations
 - 10.1 Cooperation with UN System on freshwater issues
 - 10.2 Cooperation between IHP and the UN World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP)
 - 10.3 UNESCO-IHP involvement in the 5th World Water Forum
 - 10.4 IHP's role in the International Decade for Action – Water for Life (2005-2015)
 - 10.5 Cooperation with non-governmental organizations

11. Preparations for the 18th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council (Paris, 9 – 14 June 2008)
 - 11.1 Recommendations by the IHP National Committees of Region I (Western Europe and Northern America) to the IHP Bureau for improving the running operations of the IHP Intergovernmental Council sessions
 - 11.2 Need for amendment of Article IV (Officers) of the Rules of Procedure of the IHP Intergovernmental Council
12. Other matters
13. Approval of the Final Report and closure of the meeting

ANNEX II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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ANNEX III

LIST OF DOCUMENTS
(all documents in English only)

Document Code (IHP/Bur-XLI/...)	Title	Agenda item
1	Agenda	2
2	Timetable	2
3	Final Report	1 – 13
4	List of documents	-
5	List of participants	-
6	Report of the Secretariat on the 34 th session of the General Conference and on the 177 th and 178 th sessions of the Executive Board of UNESCO, including overview of the Medium-term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4) and the Programme and Budget for 2008-2009 (34 C/5)	3
7	Follow-up to the Report of the Overall Review Committee for Major Programmes II and III	4
8	Implementation of resolutions and other recommendations adopted by the 17 th session of the Intergovernmental Council of IHP	5
9	Progress report on cooperation of the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education with the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) of UNESCO	6.1
10	Proposed category 2 water-related centres	6.2
11	Overview of newly-approved category 2 water-related centres	6.3
12	Implementation of the strategy for UNESCO's category 1 and category 2 water related institutes and centres	6.4
13	Results of IHP-VI implementation since the 17 th session of the Intergovernmental Council of IHP	7.1
14	IHP-related extrabudgetary activities	7.2
15	Cooperation with other UNESCO environmental programmes	7.3
16	Implementation of IHP-VII: Focus for 2008-2009	8
17	Progress report on recent IHP initiatives and programmes	9
18	Cooperation with UN system on freshwater issues	10.1
19	Cooperation between IHP and the UN World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP)	10.2

Document Code (IHP/Bur-XLI/...)	Title	Agenda item
20	UNESCO-IHP involvement in the 5 th World Water Forum	10.3
21	IHP's role in the International Decade For Action – "Water For Life" (2005-2015)	10.4
22	Recommendations by the IHP National Committees of Region I (Western Europe and Northern America) to the IHP Bureau for improving the running operations of the sessions of the IHP Intergovernmental Council	11.1
23	Preliminary concept paper for a UNESCO-IHE initiative on "World Water Sites (WWS)"	9
Ref.1	Proposal for the establishment of an International Centre for Coastal Ecohydrology and Climate Change, in Portugal, as a category 2 water-related centre (under the auspices of UNESCO)	6.2
Ref.2	Proposal for the establishment of a Regional Research Centre for the Sustainable Management of Water Resources in the Caribbean Island States, in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, as a category 2 water-related centre (under the auspices of UNESCO)	6.2
Ref.3	Proposal for the establishment of the International Centre for Integrated Water Resources Management (ICIWaRM), hosted by the Institute for Water Resources (IWR), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as a category 2 water-related centre (under the auspices of UNESCO)	6.2
Ref.4	Proposal for the establishment of the Central Asian Regional Glaciological Centre, in Kazakhstan, as a category 2 water-related centre (under the auspices of UNESCO)	6.2
Ref.5	Proposal for the establishment of a Centre for Water Science and Hydropolitics, at Stockholm University, Sweden, as a category 2 water-related centre (under the auspices of UNESCO)	6.2

ANNEX IV

**REVISED PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE
18TH SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL OF IHP**

1. Opening of the session
2. Election of the incoming Chairperson
3. Election of the Vice-Chairpersons
4. Adoption of the agenda
5. Determination of the Council's method of work
6. Report on the 34th session of the General Conference and on the 177th to the 179th sessions of the Executive Board of UNESCO, including overview of the Medium-term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4) and the Programme and Budget for 2008-2009 (34 C/5)
7. Follow-up to the Report of the Overall Review Committee for Major Programmes II and III
8. Review of the implementation of the resolutions and other recommendations adopted by the 17th session of the Intergovernmental Council of IHP
 - 8.1 Progress report on the implementation of the resolutions and other recommendations
 - 8.2 Report of the IHP Finance Committee
9. UNESCO's water-related centres (category 1 and category 2)
 - 9.1 UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education (category 1)
 - 9.2 Proposed category 2 centres
 - 9.3 Overview of recently-established category 2 centres
 - 9.4 Strategy for UNESCO's category 1 and category 2 water-related institutes and centres
 - 9.5 Nominations for office bearers in various boards of category 1 and category 2 centres
10. Review of IHP-VI activities and related activities of UNESCO
 - 10.1 Results of IHP-VI projects since the 17th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council
 - 10.2 IHP-related extrabudgetary activities
 - 10.3 Cooperation with other UNESCO environmental programmes
11. Implementation of IHP-VII: Focus for 2008-2009

12. Progress report on recent IHP initiatives and programmes
 - 12.1 Water and Cultural Diversity
 - 12.2 IHP's role in the Thematic Programme on Education for Sustainable Water Management of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD, 2005-2014)
 - 12.3 IHP involvement in the UNESCO Strategy on Climate Change
13. Relations with United Nations and non-governmental organizations
 - 13.1 Cooperation with UN System on freshwater issues
 - 13.2 Cooperation with non-governmental organizations
 - 13.3 Co-operation between IHP and the UN World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP)
 - 13.4 UNESCO-IHP involvement in the 5th World Water Forum
 - 13.5 IHP's role in the International Decade for Action – Water for Life (2005-2015)
14. Adoption of the report
15. Closure of the session

ANNEX V

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND SPECIAL TERMS UNSED IN THIS REPORT

DESD	UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014)
GEF	Global Environment Facility
G-WADI	Global Network on Water and Development Information for Arid Lands
HELP	Hydrology for the Environment, Life and Policy
IAH	International Association of Hydrogeologists
IAHS	International Association of Hydrological Sciences
ICIWaRM	International Centre for Integrated Water Resources Management
IFI	International Flood Initiative
IGRAC	International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre
IHE	International Institute for Infrastructural, Hydraulic and Environment Engineering, now called the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education
IHP	International Hydrological Programme (of UNESCO)
IHP-IV	Fourth Phase of the International Hydrological Programme (1990-1995)
IHP-V	Fifth Phase of the International Hydrological Programme (1996-2001)
IHP-VI	Sixth Phase of the International Hydrological Programme (2002-2007)
IHP-VII	Seventh Phase of the International Hydrological Programme (2008-2013)
IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (of UNESCO)
ISI	International Sediment Initiative
IUGG	International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
UN	United Nations
UNECE	UN Economic Commission for Europe
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCO-IHE	UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WWAP	UN World Water Assessment Programme
WWDR	World Water Development Report