



International Hydrological Programme

18th session of the Intergovernmental Council
(Paris, 9 – 14 June 2008)

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

Item 8.1 of the provisional agenda

SUMMARY

This document presents a summary of actions taken in the implementation of the Resolutions adopted at the 17th session of the Intergovernmental Council of the IHP, as of April 2008.

The Council may wish to comment and provide recommendations where appropriate on the follow up to the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the 17th session of the IHP Council as discussed above.

RESOLUTION XVII-1

Strengthening linkages between UNESCO-IHP and UNESCO-IHE

1. An external evaluation of UNESCO-IHE was conducted in order to provide input to relevant decisions by UNESCO's governing bodies as well as those by the Government of the Netherlands. Among its recommendations, the evaluation recommended that UNESCO-IHE increase its efforts towards greater integration into UNESCO. To that end, UNESCO-IHE is preparing a major input to the Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (DESD), including convening several workshops on water education and through the provision of training and development of training materials for educators. Upon the recommendation of the Science Commission, noting the favourable evaluation, the General Conference of UNESCO authorized the Director General to renew the Operational Agreement of UNESCO-IHE before the expiry of the current agreement (1 May 2008).
2. As reported in by the Governing Board of the UNESCO-IHE Institute For Water Education on the activities of the institute, to the 34th General Conference of UNESCO (document 34 C/REP/21), particular attention has been paid by UNESCO-IHE in 2006-2007 to increasing the level of collaboration with UNESCO category 2 water centres, as well as with IHP and relevant UNESCO Chairs throughout the world. In this framework, the Institute has a bilateral cooperation agreement with RCUWM (Iran) and has an active collaboration in training and research with ICHARM (Japan). With IHP, the Institute has continued to work under PC-CP (From Potential Conflict to Cooperation Potential). Additionally, the Institute is playing an active part in the preparation of the World Water Development Report under the direction of the World Water Assessment Programme. In addition the Institute envisions substantial programmes with the International Centre on Hydroinformatics at Itaipú Binacional under the auspices of UNESCO, in Brazil and Paraguay, and the proposed HydroEx center focusing on integrated water resources management.
3. UNESCO-IHE is contributing to the regional workshops on water education, and will host and help to coordinate the workshop for Europe and North America. These workshops are part of a global effort to compile best practices, recommendations and guidelines in water education. The Institute has MoUs with several institutions in both the North and South facilitating joint research activities as well as faculty exchanges and shared responsibilities for preparing MSc and PhD students.
4. In order to directly support the creation of enhanced opportunities for water education and research, a UNESCO Tertiary Water Education Grants Programme, targeted at students from developing countries who wish to study at UNESCO-IHE, will be created in close collaboration with the UNESCO regional offices. The Bureau reviewed at its 41st session a draft proposal (Annex to document IHP/Bur-XLI/9) outlining the main elements of the Grants Programme which was prepared at the request of the Bureau (IHP/Bur-XL/3, paragraph 12). The Bureau endorsed the proposal and requested that the IHP Intergovernmental Council consider it in its 18th session in order to make the programme operational for the forthcoming 2008/2009 academic year. As instructed by the Bureau, the Secretariat finalized the draft text (see Annex of document IHP/IC-XVIII/Inf.6), in cooperation with the relevant central services of UNESCO, and submits it for approval to the 18th session of the Intergovernmental Council (for the decision, see document IHP/IC-XVIII/6, "Water education initiatives"). The Bureau noted that the rules of the programme should not exclude potential cooperation with category 2 centres.

RESOLUTION XVII-2

Establishment of a Regional Centre for Integrated Water Management in Arid Zones in Pakistan under the auspices of UNESCO (category 2)

5. This resolution requested the assistance of the Secretariat to prepare the necessary documentation to be submitted to the governing bodies of UNESCO toward the creation of a regional centre for water management research in arid zones in Pakistan as a centre under the auspices of UNESCO (category 2). The process was carried forward successfully up to the approval of the centre by the General Conference at its 34th session. More information is given in document IHP/IC-XVIII/Inf.7 on 'Overview of recently-approved category 2 water-related centres'.

RESOLUTION XVII-3

Establishment of an IHP-HELP International Centre of Water Management for Food Security in Australia, under the auspices of UNESCO (category 2)

6. The 17th session of the Intergovernmental Council after considering the proposal decided to welcome the proposal to establish an IHP-HELP International Centre of Water Management for Food Security in Australia as a UNESCO category 2 centre, requesting the IHP Secretariat to lend assistance in the preparation of the document required for the formal submittal to the governing bodies of UNESCO.

7. The 177th session of the Executive Board of UNESCO examined document 177 EX/11, the report by the Director-General on the feasibility study of the Centre, and welcomed the proposal of the Government of Australia to establish such a centre, recommending that the General Conference approve its establishment.

8. The 34th session of the UNESCO General Conference approved the granting, in principle, to the IHP international centre of water for food security (IC-WATER) in Australia, of the status of category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO and delegated "to the Executive Board the final decision to authorize the Director-General to conclude and, after the Executive Board has approved the terms, sign an agreement between UNESCO and the Government of Australia" (document 34 C/80 – paragraph 64).

9. A letter was dispatched by the IHP Secretariat on 31 January 2008 to the Permanent Delegate of Australia to UNESCO asking if the new government of Australia is ready to proceed with signing the Agreement (which should be submitted to the Executive Board).

RESOLUTION XVII-4

Creation of an International Centre on Hydroinformatics for Integrated Water Resources Management at Itaipú Binacional under the auspices of UNESCO (category 2)

10. This resolution requested the assistance of the IHP Secretariat to prepare the necessary documentation to be submitted to the governing bodies of UNESCO toward the creation of International Centre on Hydroinformatics as a centre under the auspices of UNESCO (category 2) at Itaipú Binacional, in the territories of Brazil and Paraguay. The process was carried forward successfully up to the approval of the centre by the General Conference at its 34th session. More information is given in document IHP/IC-XVIII/Inf.7 *Overview of recently-approved category 2 water-related centres*.

RESOLUTION XVII-5

Creation of a Regional Centre for Sustainable Water Engineering and Management in Bangkok, Thailand, under the auspices of UNESCO (category 2)

11. The Thai Government requested that a proposal for the establishment of a Sustainable Water Engineering and Management Centre under the auspices of UNESCO at the Asian Institute of Technology in Thailand be considered by the 177th (Fall 2007) session of the UNESCO Executive Board. Given that the proposal would need to undergo review by the Secretariat, a feasibility study would need to be undertaken and a draft agreement would need to be discussed, the proposal could not be submitted to that session of the Executive Board. Upon the review of the proposal for the centre to be established in the light of the General Conference document 33 C/19 entitled "Principles and guidelines for the establishment and functioning of UNESCO institutes and centres (category 1) and institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO (category 2)", as well as the strategy for UNESCO water related category 1 and category 2 centres adopted by the IHP Council (see Executive Board document 177 EX/INF.9), the IHP Secretariat concluded that the proposal required revision in order to be further processed. The proposal was sent back to the Thai National Commission for UNESCO on 11 December 2007 for resubmission with revision.

RESOLUTION XVII-6

Establishment of the National Water Resources Institute in Kaduna, Nigeria, as a regional water centre under the auspices of UNESCO

12. At the 17th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council, Nigeria indicated that the National Water Resources Institute (NWRI) in Kaduna, Nigeria, established with the assistance of UNESCO, was providing a key educational role for water resources specialists in Nigeria and other African countries. Nigeria proposed that this institute become a centre under the auspices of UNESCO. The Council welcomed this proposal, adopting Resolution XVII-6 to this effect. To date, UNESCO has not received any official letter or proposal concerning establishment of the above-mentioned centre under the auspices of UNESCO.

RESOLUTION XVII-7

The development of a strategy for UNESCO's category 1 and category 2 water-related institutes and centres

13. The strategy document that was developed for UNESCO's category 1 and category 2 water-related institutes and centres as a follow up to Resolution XVII-7, was approved by the Intergovernmental Council on 15 September 2007 through an out-of-session consultation. The application of the strategy has already started with the evaluation of an existing centre and in the process of consideration of new proposals for category 2 water-related centres. Additional details concerning the strategy can be found in document IHP/IC-XVIII/Inf.8.

RESOLUTION XVII-8

Governance of the International Hydrological Programme

14. At the 17th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council, the outgoing Chairperson of the IHP presented a document that the Bureau had prepared on the follow-up to Resolution XVI-7 on IHP governance. The draft resolution and a proposed change in the Statutes of the IHP Council would enable the creation of regional intergovernmental councils as subsidiary bodies of the IHP Council. No consensus could be reached on the issue and the Council adopted Resolution XVII-8 on governance, in which it instructed the Bureau to make, in consultation with IHP National Committees or Focal Points, a more comprehensive

study on the governance of UNESCO-IHP, including the financial, legal and operational feasibility, to be presented to the 18th session of the Intergovernmental Council of IHP.

15. During their 7th meeting, held in Guatemala City from 12 to 13 August 2007, the IHP National Committees and Focal Points of IHP for Latin America and the Caribbean agreed on a decision to search for a governing mechanism allowing, in a more efficient manner, the presentation of the region's agreements and positions before the governmental bodies of UNESCO/IHP. In this regard, the countries of the region are willing to explore different arrangements, including but not limited to the establishment of a Regional Intergovernmental Council, as a potential governing body that will meet periodically (every 2 years) in the region. The mechanism to be selected will need to allow for a more participatory framework, especially for smaller countries that do not have the means to be present at the Intergovernmental Council in Paris.

16. The 12th Regional Meeting of the Arab National Committees of the International Hydrological Programme of UNESCO, which was held in Al-Ain, United Arab Emirates during the period 6-8 November 2007 endorsed the concept of regional governance of IHP per the Resolution XVII-8 of the 17th session of the Intergovernmental Council (Paris, 3 – 7 July 2006) focusing on the Governance of the International Hydrological Programme. Moreover, the objective of adapting and modernizing the governance of the IHP, in order to enhance the participation of all Member States in the successful implementation of the IHP-VII activities in the Arab region. Moreover, specific inputs were given to strengthen the IHP National Committees and their Governance mechanism. The governance of IHP is foreseen to be debated also in the 2nd Sub Saharan Africa Regional IHP Meeting on 13 March 2008.

17. In a final statement of the majority of the participants of the meeting of the IHP National Committees of Region I held in Istanbul, Turkey from 20 to 21 September 2007, it was declared that Region I is not willing to accept a regional intergovernmental council. With the proposal to hold the next meeting in a country outside Region I, Region I demonstrates its willingness to support other regions to organize themselves. Region I would like to have more support from the Secretariat for the IHP National Committees and especially to help establish IHP Secretariats.

18. The African IHP National Committees that met in Cape Town, South Africa from 12 to 13 March 2008 recognized the urgent need of strengthening the IHP National Committees and the regional coordination and actions. Towards more effective action at the regional level, the meeting decided to create a coordinating or steering group composed of representatives of the six African IHP National Committees currently members of the IHP Council, plus two other that would be co-opted.

19. The 41st session of the Bureau re-examined the issue of IHP governance, 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.

RESOLUTION XVII-9

Preliminary proposal for the Main Lines of Action for the Draft Programme and Budget for 2008-2009 (Draft 34 C/5)

20. By means of this resolution, the IHP Intergovernmental Council recommended to the Director-General of UNESCO the alignment of the 34 C/5 Programme and Budget, 2008-2009 on the part corresponding to the freshwater programme with the themes of the strategic plan for the 7th Phase of IHP. In particular, it proposed the following Main lines of Action (MLAs):

- MLA-1: Enhancing adaptation capacities against the impacts of global changes on catchments and aquifers
- MLA-2: Developing guidelines for managing the interactions of hydrology, water quality, human and ecosystem health and food security at watershed scale
- MLA-3: Improving science-based water governance in various socio-economic settings for sustainability
- Joint MLA-4: Developing ecohydrology for sustainability (with the Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme of UNESCO)
- Joint MLA-5: Improving freshwater education programmes at all levels and building capacities for sustainable water resources management (with UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education and the Education Sector of UNESCO)

21. The IHP Secretariat initially proposed this structure and in the first drafts of the 34 C/5 parts corresponding to the Science Sector this five MLA scheme appeared thus. However, as reported in greater detail in document IHP/IC-XVIII/Inf.2, the number of MLAs was drastically reduced from the previous version of the C/5, partly obeying to expressed desire of the Member States to have more focused and streamlined UNESCO biennial programme. For the 2006-2007 biennium the freshwater subprogramme of UNESCO had four MLAs, and the Science Sector as a whole had eighteen. This biennium IHP shares only two MLAs of the four allotted to the entire Science Sector. Despite this limitation, it has been possible to respect the IHP-VII structure and scope as the Actions and Activities identified in the workplan for this biennium closely mirror the Themes and Focal Areas of IHP-VII (see document IHP/IC-XVIII/Inf.12). The cooperation with MAB and UNESCO-IHE obey the requirements of the different activities and are expressed in the workplan.

22. The 41st session of the Bureau recommended that during 2008-2009, the first biennium of IHP-VII, emphasis in the programme execution should be placed 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.

RESOLUTION XVII-10

Draft Strategic Plan for the 7th Phase of IHP (2008-2013)

23. The following action has been taken to implement this Resolution: A circular letter (SC/WATER/498) was sent on 20 July 2007 to all IHP National Committees, with copy to the Permanent Delegations. This letter requested for comments on the Draft Strategic Plan. The IHP Bureau took up this matter at its 40th session (Delft 13-15 June 2007) as recorded in paragraphs 31-34 of the report of its meeting (IHP/Bur-XL/3). The Draft Strategic Plan was consolidated and endorsed by the Bureau for out-of-session approval. The Secretariat of IHP initiated the out-of-session approval process by sending the Strategic Plan to the Member States for consideration. The expressions of the positions of the Member States

were invited by 10 September 2007 on an “objections only” basis, meaning that a reply was required only if a Member of the IHP Council did not wish to approve the plan as it stands.

24. No Member State objected to the approval of the IHP-VII Strategic Plan. In total 82 Member States have participated individually or by group to its preparation. The Netherlands has stressed the importance of fully considering and including into the IHP-VII Implementation Plan the strategy for the centres and the links with the water-related UNESCO Chairs as the *sine qua non* condition for their full approval of the plan. The strategy having been approved recently, in 2007, this process of preparing the IHP-VII Implementation Plan will be initiated in 2008 and discussed with the IHP Bureau. India and Turkey have expressed their concern about the components of the IHP-VII related to conflict resolution on water sharing and the water and energy Focal Area.

25. In a circular letter dated 12 December 2007, sent to the IHP National Committees by the Secretariat of IHP, the out-of-session approval of the Strategic Plan for Phase VII of the IHP was announced and inputs to the Implementation Plan of the IHP-VII were requested for. More specifically, the IHP National Committees were invited to prepare a plan of activities, defining in more detail their contribution and identifying the themes and activities in which they would like to participate or lead. A need for a close coordination of certain activities with the UNESCO category 2 centres was emphasized as well as the possibility to participate at any given moment during the six year period in the IHP-VII programme.

26. The Implementation Plan of the IHP-VII is presented for discussion and evaluation by the 18th Intergovernmental Council in document (IHP/IC-XVIII/Inf.12) on “Implementation of IHP-VII: Focus for 2008-2009”. The Themes and Focal Areas outlined in IHP-VII are already reflected in the UNESCO Programme and Budget for 2008-2009, 34 C/5 (IHP/IC-XVIII/Inf.2)

RESOLUTION XVII-11

Collaboration among international organizations and programmes involved in water-related hazard mitigation

27. The International Flood Initiative (IFI), launched by UNESCO and WMO to address existing flood management gaps through a holistic approach and to provide a platform for further collaborative efforts internationally. The initiative is also partnering with United Nations University (UNU), the International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS) and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR). The International Centre for Water Hazard and Risk Management (ICHARM) in Tsukuba, Japan is providing secretarial support to the initiative.

28. Following the first meeting of the Advisory Committee of the International Flood Initiative held in WMO headquarters, Geneva, 26 January 2007, a mapping exercise was carried out about the involvement in and priorities of the different partners in implementing IFI, which was published by UNESCO IHP in a brochure on IFI. The brochure summarizes as a matrix the topics addressed by each organization as well as the nature of planned activities (research, education and training, information networking, empowering communities, technical assistance). The Advisory Committee and the Management Committee of IFI consist of the main international organizations involved in flood-related activities, ensuring international coordination.

29. Specifically, IHP has fostered cooperative and collaborative activities as well as knowledge sharing in water science through the International Conference on Hydrology and Water Resources Management for Hazard Reduction and Sustainable Development (HRSD-2007), which was held in Manila, Philippines from 19 to 23 November 2007, in conjunction with the 15th Regional Steering Committee Meeting for Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

RESOLUTION XVII-12
Water Education

30. Resolution XVII-12, recognizing the lead role of UNESCO in UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014), decided to establish a group of experts to advise and guide UNESCO's work on water education and capacity building in connection to the UN-DESD programme and authorized the Bureau to constitute the working group and to set its Terms of Reference.

31. The Bureau, in an out-of-session consultation in February 2007, constituted the UNESCO Working Group on Water Education and determined its Terms of Reference. The Working Group meet for the first time on 11 to 13 April 2007, with the purpose of reviewing international trends, approaches and issues in water education in order to advice UNESCO on the development of an international work plan on Water Education for Sustainable Development. A draft of the Work Plan was presented for comments to the IHP Bureau at its 40th session. A second meeting of the Working Group took place on 18 to 20 July 2007 to review the work plan in the light of the Bureau's comments, to draft an implementation strategy with special emphasis on the 2008-2009 biennium, to discuss the issues paper developed with a view to its publication as a technical document, and to recommend potential partners and sources of funding. The secretariat, together with partners in the scope of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, is now implementing the recommendations of the Working Group.

32. The decision presented in resolution XVII-12 is implemented; the resolution also called upon the General Conference of UNESCO to approve the issuance of a strong recommendation to Member States' ministries of education, in order to strengthen water education programmes at the primary and secondary levels. This, however, is entirely within the purview of the Member States attending the General Conference.

33. Further details about the Water Education initiative are presented in document IHP/IC-XVIII/Inf.13 and action is requested in document IHP/IC-XVIII/6.