

International Hydrological Programme
56th session of the IHP Bureau
(Paris, 20-22 February 2018)

UNESCO's WATER FAMILY

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

SUMMARY

The UNESCO Water Family pursued the implementation of IHP-VIII and of the strategic goals of UNESCO, notably through its water-related Chairs and category 2 Centres (C2C), as well as the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP).

The number of water-related chairs and category 2 centres kept expanding during the reporting period. During the last 55th IHP Bureau session, the Secretariat was requested to contact the concerned Permanent Delegations in order to obtain information concerning the alignment of each C2C with UNESCO's requirements and to conduct a mapping of the aims, actions to be taken and contributions of the category 2 centres. In the meantime, an Intersectoral Working Group on Category 2 Centres has met in order to discuss and come up with concrete recommendations to the UNESCO's Senior Management Team (SMT) on how to make the network of C2C contribute more efficiently to UNESCO's mandate.

The Bureau may wish to:

- 5.1 Take note of the status of the UNESCO Water Family, of the consultations held by the Secretariat on the water-related C2C and request the Secretariat to further contact the Permanent Delegations on matters related to both finance and C2C alignment.
- 5.2 Take note of the operation of the UNESCO Water Family.
- 5.3 Take note of the cooperation with WWAP.

Status of UNESCO's Water Family (agenda sub-item 5.1)

1. UNESCO works to build the scientific knowledge base to help countries in the sustainable management of their water resources. This is done through its UNESCO Water Family, comprising the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP), 168 IHP National committees, 37 Category 2 Centres (C2C) under the auspices of UNESCO, and 54 water-related Chairs and UNITWIN Networks. UNESCO's Water Family operates as a global network that works together to implement the organization's strategic goals.

2. To date, amongst the 6 new centres approved during the 38th Session of the General Conference in November 2015, only the Agreements for the Integrated and Multi-Disciplinary Water Resources Management Centre at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece and for the African Regional Centre for Ecohydrology (ARCE), in Ethiopia, were signed. The Central Laboratory for Environmental Monitoring (CLEQM), El-Qanater, Egypt is still pending signature of its finalized draft Agreement. The Water Research Centre at the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, in Kuwait; the International Centre for the Integrated Management of Watershed and Bio-resources in Arid and Semi-Arid Regions, in the Islamic Republic of Iran; and the Regional Water Research Centre (RWRC) at the COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, in Pakistan are still in the drafting process. To remediate the partly irregular situation of some of the centres, after decision of the Government of the Republic of Colombia, the establishment of the Centre (RCUWM-LAC), whose Agreement was signed in 2007, was cancelled. The renewal of the Regional Centre on Urban Water Management (RCUWM) in the Islamic Republic of Iran was approved, and 2 proposals for the establishment of C2C have been submitted to the 202nd Session of the UNESCO Executive Board and 39th General Conference in October and November 2017, and approved:

- the Regional Centre on Water Security (CERSHI), Mexico
- the Institute for Water Education (IHE Delft), The Netherlands.

3. The IOS Audit of the UNESCO's Management Framework for Category 2 Institutes/Centres (April 2017) explained that the current number of non-operational category 2 Centres and Institutes at UNESCO is due to the continuous intake of proposals for category 2 centres without a rigorous vetting process for proposals and renewals, coupled with lengthy and cumbersome procedures to create or transform an entity into a category 2 institute/centre. The Audit assessed that it takes on average 5 years between the General Conference approval and establishment of the category 2 institute/centre. With a network of 36 established water-related centres at the time of the audit, amongst which only 20 active, IHP is no exception to the rule.

Establishment of two Category 2 Centres: Regional Centre on Water Security (CERSHI), and Institute for Water Education (IHE Delft):

4. Two C2C were approved by UNESCO's Governing bodies in October and November 2017: the first one concerned the establishment of a "Centre on Water Security" (CERSHI), hosted by the Institute of Engineering of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (II-UNAM) and the Mexican Institute of Water Technology (IMTA). The objectives of the proposed centre will be to provide the basis for the regional action of scientific, political and business communities towards achieving water security at various scales and contexts. The second concerned the former Category 1 Institute: "UNESCO-IHE", proposed as a new Category 2 Institute under the name: "IHE Delft" Institute for Water Education. The designation of IHE Delft as a Category 2 Institute will allow it to continue its major contributions to water education at the global level, by offering a unique combination of applied, scientific and participatory research in water engineering combined with natural sciences, social sciences and management and governance.

5. Two feasibility studies had confirmed the reliability of the proposals for CERSHI and IHE Delft. The Executive Board of UNESCO, at its 202nd Session in October 2017, welcomed and recommended the two proposals. The 39th UNESCO General Conference in November 2017 authorized the signature of the corresponding agreements by the Director-General. The Agreement for IHE Delft was signed on 15 December 2017.

Closure of the Regional Centre on Urban Water Management for Latin America and the Caribbean (RCUWM-LAC)

6. The Secretariat received on 6 August 2017 a letter from the Colombian authorities through the Permanent Delegation of Colombia to UNESCO concerning RCUWM-LAC, informing that the said Centre was “never opened, never in operation” and that the Government renounces its establishment. The office of Legal Affairs has been informed of this renunciation, and the Secretariat will prepare a related informative document to be presented to the 2018 spring session of the UNESCO Executive Board.

Status of Category 2 Centres:

7. As of the date of the writing of this document, the status of pending signature and/or renewals and entry into force of existing agreements for category 2 centres is as follows :

Centre	Current status
Pending signature	
Egypt – Central Laboratory for Environmental Quality Monitoring at El Qanater (CLEQM)	Finalized draft Agreement. Pending signature.
Brazil and Paraguay - International Centre on Hydroinformatics for Integrated Water Resources Management (CIH)	Tripartite Agreement not signed between UNESCO and the Governments.
South Africa - African Centre for Global Change and Water Research (ACGCWR)	Agreement in drafting process.
Pakistan - Regional centre for Water Management Research in Arid Zones (RCWMRIAZ)	Agreement in drafting process.
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Iran - International centre for the Integrated Management of Watershed and Bio-resources in Arid and Semi-Arid Regions (IMWBRA)	Agreement in drafting process.
Kuwait - Water Research Centre at the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (WRC)	Agreement in drafting process.

No entry into force	
Greece - Centre on Integrated and Multi-disciplinary Water Resources Management (AUTH)	The Agreement signed in 2016 did not enter into force.
Uruguay - Regional Centre for Groundwater Management for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEREGAS)	The Agreement signed in 2014 did not enter into force.
Portugal - International Centre on Coastal Ecohydrology (ICCE)	The Agreement signed in 2010 did not enter into force.
Ethiopia- African Regional Centre for Ecohydrology (ARCE)	The Agreement signed in 2017 should enter into force in 2018
The Netherlands – IHE Delft Institute for Water Education (IHE Delft)	The Agreement signed in 2017 should enter into force in 2018
Under transformation/closure	
Brazil - International Centre for Education, Capacity Building and Applied Research in Water (HIDROEX)	Centre in closure process. Pending official confirmation.
Under renewal	
Poland - European Regional Centre for Ecohydrology (ERCE)	Renewal Agreement in drafting process
Serbia - International Research and Training Centre on Urban Drainage (IRTCUD)	Centre pending confirmation on its status.
Chile - Water Centre for Arid and Semi-Arid Zones of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAZALAC)	Renewal Agreement in drafting process
China - International Research and Training Centre on Erosion and Sedimentation (IRTCES)	Renewal Agreement in drafting process
Malaysia - Regional Humid Tropics Hydrology and Water Resources Centre for South-East Asia and the Pacific (HTC)	Renewal Agreement in drafting process
Iran - Regional Centre on Urban Water Management (RCUWM)	Renewal Agreement approved by 202 EXB in October 2017

In summary, the current situation for all current 37 Category 2 water-related Centres is the following:

- 17 were signed and entered into force;
- 8 are in process of drafting the Agreement or pending signature;

- 5 were signed but did not yet enter into force;
- 1 is under transformation/closure
- 6 are under renewal

UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN networks

8. The UNESCO Water Family currently includes 54 water-related UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN networks. Six proposals for water-related chairs were approved in 2017. They are: UNESCO Chair on Groundwater arsenic within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, University of Southern Queensland (Australia); UNESCO Chair on South Asia Sustainable Water Resources Management, University of Moratuwa (Sri Lanka); UNESCO Chair on Water, Energy and Disaster Management for Sustainable Development, Kyoto University (Japan); UNESCO Chair on Capacity Building of Meteorology and Hydrology Department, National University of Laos, (Laos); UNESCO Chair on Water and Peace, Universidad Rey Juan Carlos and UNED (Spain); and UNESCO Chair on Sustainable Water Security, Florida International University (USA).

Report on the Consultation and mapping on the status of the water-related Category 2 Centres under the auspices of UNESCO

9. Following the 55th session of the IHP Bureau, and at the request of the Bureau, the Secretariat is currently preparing a: “*mapping process of the aims, actions to be taken and contributions of the category 2 centres*”. The mapping will be presented to the next IHP Council in 2018, after reception of the Biennial Reports by the Centres on their activities related to IHP in the period 2016-2017. Starting 27 July 2017, the Secretariat consulted all Centres and Chairs, requesting their financial information in contribution to IHP: out of 36 C2C, 10 responded; out of 48 Chairs, 7 responded. Concerning the second part of the Bureau decision on the “*alignment of each C2C with UNESCO’s requirements*”, the Secretariat consulted the Permanent Delegations on 18 September 2017 on the status of their unaligned water-related C2C. Amongst the 15 Permanent Delegations contacted, 7 have responded (3 provided explanations on the status of their Centre, and 4 resumed negotiations on their draft Agreement).

The Bureau requests that the Secretariat consult once more the Permanent Delegations concerning both finance matters and unaligned C2Cs, asking them to intervene in order to accelerate the reply process.

Operation of the UNESCO Water Family (agenda sub-item 5.2)

10. The Sector for Natural Sciences (SC) of UNESCO organized the “First meeting of the UNESCO Chairs in Natural Sciences: for Policy Action towards the 2030 Agenda” from 4 to 7 July 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland. The purpose of the meeting was, among others, to encourage the SC chairs to better align their activities with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The meeting was organized as a part of the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the UNITWIN/UNESCO chairs Programme. 95 chairs attended the conference and 21, out of 48 water-related chairs at that time, attended the meeting. Two parallel sessions were organized on water related issues by the Division of Water Sciences: i) Water resources, climate change and hydrological hazards; and, ii) Transboundary cooperation and water diplomacy.

11. During the conference, IHP also organized a brown bag lunch meeting on Water and Gender on 7 July. The outcomes of the first UNESCO Meeting of Water-Related Chairs including the Perugia Action Plan (as the result of the 1st Water Chair meeting in 2016) were presented during the side event. In addition, Euphrasie Yao, Chair holder, UNESCO Chair in Water, Women and Decision-making (Ivory Coast), shared best practices and lessons learnt from working on water and gender issues in Ivory Coast. Helmut Habersack, IHP Vice-Chairperson (Group I - Western Europe and North America) and Chair holder of the UNESCO Chair for integrated River Research and Management (Austria), also presented the main outcomes of the 55th Session of the IHP Bureau in June 2017. This presentation allowed the chairs to get a better understanding of the governance of IHP and the latest information about the outcomes of the 55th IHP Bureau. The meeting allowed the chairs to discuss the challenges that they face, propose solutions to address them and explore possibilities of creating partnerships. The participants of the meeting committed to continue using the web platform put in place by the UNESCO Chair on Water Resources Management and Culture (Perugia, Italy). For more information about the platform, please consult the following link <https://waterchairrelated.herokuapp.com/>.

World Water Assessment Programme (agenda sub-item 5.3)

12. The 2015 external evaluation on WWAP registered the flagship status of the WWDR and concluded that the Report is one of the most visible publications of UNESCO and an authoritative source of information on freshwater. The capacity and experience to manage and coordinate the production of WWDR are identified as important assets of the WWAP Secretariat.

13. There is considerable gap in terms of sex-disaggregated data in the water domain. WWAP developed a toolkit including the methodology for sex-disaggregated data collection and gender-sensitive indicators. The Toolkit is tested with success in Latin America, Africa and Central Asia as one of the pillars of the Groundwater Resources Governance in Transboundary Aquifers (GGRETA) project implemented by IHP. Furthermore, the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) included the WWAP Toolkit in the Guidelines for Gender and Climate Change of the UNFCCC.

14. Reporting for each of the eight targets and 11 indicators of SDG 6 is led by the respective custodian United Nations agencies. As the overall policy impact of the specific target/indicator oriented reports is likely to be limited, WWAP introduced the idea to produce a SDG 6 Synthesis Report that will add value by evaluating and synthesizing the detailed target/indicator reports, examining the interlinkages between SDG 6 in light of the whole 2030 Agenda, and generating main policy recommendations to accelerate achieving SDG 6.

15. UN-Water adopted this recommendation and gave the responsibility to WWAP to coordinate the UN-Water Task Force that will produce the SDG 6 Synthesis Report 2018 (SR). The members of the TF are CEO Water Mandate, FAO, ILO, UNDP, UNECE, UNEP, UNESCO, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNU, UN-Water TAU, WHO, WMO¹ and the World Bank Group. This Report is scheduled for June 2018, in time to be UN-Water's main input for the

¹ Food and Agriculture Organization, International Labor Organization, United Nations Development Programme, UN Economic Commission for Europe, UN Environment, UN Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization UN-Habitat, United Nation's Children Fund, United Nations University, UN-Water Technical Advisory Unit, World Health Organization, World Meteorological Organization

meeting of High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in July 2018 during which HLPF will be conducting its first in-depth review of SDG 6. The Report will enable the United Nations to speak with one voice on SDG 6.

16. WWAP, in cooperation with the TAU, raised the funds for the production of the Report. The donors are the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment of The Netherlands. Furthermore, core funds from the Government of Italy (WWAP), Sweden (SIDA) through TAU are utilized.