

Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme

24th session of the Intergovernmental Council
(Paris, 28-30 June 2021)

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

Summary

This document includes items with relevance to the water programmes of UNESCO, including: a) A report on the Statutes and Rules of Procedure of IHP and b) Proposed Terms of Reference / Guidelines for IHP National Committees

REPORT ON THE REVISION OF THE STATUTES OF THE IHP INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL AND OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE (Agenda sub-item 4.1)

1. The Statutes of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) have been approved by the General Conference of UNESCO at its 18th session and amended at its 20th, 21st, 23rd, 27th and 28th sessions.
2. The Rules of Procedures (RoP) of the IHP's Intergovernmental Council (IGC) were approved at the Council's first session and modified in accordance with the amendment of the Council's Statutes by the General Conference of UNESCO at its 21st, 23rd and 28th sessions.
3. At its 52nd session (June 2015), the Bureau stressed the need to update the Statutes and RoP. Following up to the Bureau's request, the Secretariat conducted in autumn 2015 a survey, whose outcomes were presented at the 53rd session of the Bureau (April 2016) for further direction.
4. IHP's Council, at its 22nd session (June 2016), endorsed the Bureau's decision aiming to update the Statutes and RoP by its Resolution XXII-1. The IHP Secretariat proposed then its revisions to the articles and launched a consultation among Member States between October and December 2016 for collecting their views. Member States reverted with their revisions and comments.
5. The Secretariat received several replies, both regional and individual, and rephrased the responses in order to create a coherent document to be debated upon. The consolidated draft documents were circulated to Member States in October 2017, requesting them to confirm their agreement, or disagreement, that the Secretariat's rephrasing of the articles mirrored accurately their input. Some Member States/Regions considered that their standpoints were not precisely reflected and proposed concrete, reformulated articles during this last phase of the consultation process. These comments were taken into account and a new formulation was then proposed to Member States. The Secretariat synthesized, for ease of comparison, the responses.
6. This consolidated document was edited following the comments received by the IHP Bureau Members at the 56th Bureau session (20-22 February 2018). In particular, the Bureau requested the Secretariat to create an open-ended group, led by the Permanent Delegations of the countries member of the Bureau, but composed by all interested Member States represented by their Permanent Delegations, that would work on the Statutes and Rules of Procedure prior to the 23rd IGC, taking into consideration the recommendations of the UNESCO open-ended group on governance.
7. The open-ended group met on 19 April 2018, 27 April 2018 and 3 May 2018. On Friday 18 May 2018 (10:00-13:00), all Permanent Delegations were invited to the last meeting (Room VII) of the group prior to the 23rd session of the Council (11-15 June 2018), in order to have a consolidated document to be presented to the Council. Although the open-ended group worked both on the Statutes and the Rules of Procedure, it decided that only the Statutes would be brought forward to the Council for their adoption. The Rules of Procedure would be dealt with only after the Statutes would have been approved by UNESCO's General Conference at its 40th session.
8. This final draft of the text of the Statutes was then submitted to and adopted by the 23rd session of the Council. The revised Statutes were presented to the 206th session of the Executive Board (April 2019) and endorsed with the following amendment: "The running expenses of the Council and its subsidiary organs and travel expenses of the representatives of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States members of the IHP

Council to meetings of the Council and its Bureau shall be financed from funds appropriated for this purpose by the General Conference of UNESCO”.

9. The revised Statutes were adopted by the 40th General Conference (November 2019) and their revised version is presented at document 40 C/62 Corr.

10. The IHP Council decided, at its First Extraordinary Session (28 November 2019), that the open-ended group resumes the work on the Rules of Procedure, in view of harmonizing them with the revision of the Council's Statutes by the 40th General Conference. These revised Rules of Procedure shall be submitted to the 24th session of the IHP Council for adoption. This group was led by the Permanent Delegations to UNESCO of the country members of the IHP Bureau and included, for their institutional memory, the Permanent Delegations of the country members of the outgoing IHP Bureau, as well as all the Permanent Delegations that wish to participate.

11. The Secretariat facilitated three working group meetings from January to February 2020 (24 January, 30 January and 6 February 2020) and an open consultation to all Permanent Delegations (20 February 2020) for validating the draft prior to its presentation at the 24th session of the Council, in order to receive the endorsement of the Council. The revised Rules of Procedure are presented in document [IHP/IC-XXIV/Ref. 2](#).

PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE OF IHP NATIONAL COMMITTEES (Agenda sub-item 4.2)

12. UNESCO's Intergovernmental Council, in performing its functions relies as much as possible on the activities of the National Committees established by Member States in accordance with the recommendation contained in paragraph 6 of resolution 18C/2.232 and foster by all means their active participation in the programme.

13. Eversince, decisions concerning governance were taken by the 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th sessions of the IHP Council.

14. Resolution XIII-2 resolution of the Council proposed to its Members that IHP National Committees include representatives of government services, universities and research institutes, the private sector and NGOs and that these Committees should play the role of advisory bodies in hydrology to the government as well as facilitating activities in hydrology at the international level with IHP.

15. More recently, Resolution XVI-7 stressed the importance of the IHP Committees and of linking all parts of the IHP system (its governing bodies, its National Committees, the UNESCO water related Chairs and Category 2 Centres)

16. Today, UNESCO's Water Family comprises of the IHP Secretariat provided by the Director General of UNESCO, with the Director of the Division of Water Sciences acting as the Secretary, the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP), the 169 IHP National Committees, the 66 water related UNESCO Chairs and 36 UNESCO Category 2 Centres. Member States, through the IHP Intergovernmental Council, agree on the work of the IHP in Phases, and should own and deliver on the IHP's objectives.

17. IHP National Committees (NC) are constituted under the authority of national governments. NCs are the owners of the IHP and should have a two-fold mandate: (a) To provide advice to the Government on water-related research, education and capacity development for informed national water policy and sustainable water management; and (b)

To be coordinating bodies working with other NCs to achieve shared water objectives, within the IHP framework.

18. To date, some countries do not have NCs, while the IHP Secretariat and others in the UNESCO Water Family do encourage these to be established. The functionality and size of NCs varies from a focal person to a significantly large Committee and from very active with significant commitment to barely functional.

19. The recent mid-term evaluation of IHP-VIII, recommends that each National Committee should have clearly defined functions, including specific roles delivering specific Phase-VIII and -IX targets and to increase interaction with and support to policy makers. Furthermore, it is recommended that each member of the UNESCO Water Family becomes accountable for the implementation of specific outputs of the Programme as these are identified within IHP-IX.

20. The IHP Secretariat, in an effort to facilitate the active participation of the IHP NCs, prepared draft Terms of Reference (ToR) / Guidelines for them (presented in Reference document [IHP/IC-XXIV/Ref. 3](#)). The draft ToR / Guidelines were shared with the Members of the IHP Bureau and the inputs received were incorporated in the aforementioned Reference document.