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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY FOR UNESCO'S WATER-RELATED CATEGORY 1 INSTITUTE AND CATEGORY 2 CENTRES

Item 6.4 of the provisional agenda

SUMMARY

This document provides an update of the implementation of the strategy for UNESCO's water-related institute and centres, approved by the IHP Intergovernmental Council in September 2007.

1. Following recommendations of the Bureau, which deliberated on the issue of developing a strategy for UNESCO water-related centres at the 38th and 39th sessions, the 17th session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council held further discussions and adopted Resolution XVII-7. This resolution decided to create a Task Force to prepare a draft strategy for centres and tasked the Secretariat to convene a meeting of directors of category 2 centres.
2. Based on the discussions that took place at the meeting of this Task Force on 1 – 2 February 2007, a draft strategy was developed. In May 2007, the document was circulated among IHP National Committees, directors of the category 1 Institute and category 2 water-related centres and regional hydrologists, and comments were received from over 30 countries. The draft strategy that was revised based on these comments was further discussed at the meeting of the Directors of water-related centres that took place on 11 – 12 June 2007. The participants of this meeting made further modifications to the draft strategy, which was presented to the Bureau at its 40th session in June 2007 (IHP/Bur-XL/8 rev., Strategy for UNESCO's category 1 and category 2 water-related centres).
3. The proposal on the strategy consolidated by the Bureau (IHP/Bur-XL/8 rev. (Consolidated)) was then submitted to the Intergovernmental Council of IHP between sessions, under article 28 of the Rules of Procedure of IHP, in July 2007. The strategy document was approved by the Intergovernmental Council on an 'objections only' basis on 15 September 2007.
4. Since its approval, the strategy has been formally acknowledged by the governing organs of UNESCO. It was one of the information documents (177 EX/INF.9) for document 177 EX/29, Report by the Director-General on the implementation of the guidelines and criteria for category 2 institutes and centres adopted in 33 C/Resolution 90. This document was prepared by UNESCO's Bureau of Strategic Planning and represents work in progress in the review of the UNESCO centres guidelines. Furthermore, the 34th session of the General Conference in October 2007 noted the water centres strategy in Resolution 22 (document 34 C/Resolutions).
5. In line with the guidelines set in the strategy for water-related centres, the Regional Centre on Urban Water Management (RCUWM) in Tehran, Iran, has undergone an evaluation. This will be an element in the decision on extending the agreement with the Government of Iran for another five years.
6. Moreover, the procedures set in the strategy for considering new proposals of category 2 centres under the auspices of UNESCO are being observed for new proposals. Proposals have been submitted from Portugal for an International Centre for Coastal Ecohydrology and Climate Change, from the USA for an International Center for Integrated Water Resources Management, and from Kazakhstan for a Regional Glaciological Center. Additionally, the Dominican Republic, as recommended by the 40th session of the IHP Bureau, has submitted a revised proposal for a Centre for the Sustainable Water Resources Management in Island States of the Caribbean (Centro de Gestión Sostenible de los Recursos Hídricos en los Estados Insulares del Caribe - GSRH). These proposals will be submitted to the Bureau at its 41st session, and discussed under agenda item 6.2 (document IHP/Bur-XLI/10).