



International Hydrological Programme

43rd session of the IHP Bureau
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REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT ON THE 180TH AND 181ST SESSIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNESCO, INCLUDING PREPARATIONS FOR THE 182ND SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AND THE 35TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

SUMMARY

This document summarizes the decisions on water related issues of the 180th and 181st sessions of the Executive Board, the preparations for the 182nd session of the Executive Board and the 35th session of the UNESCO General Conference. In particular, it includes decisions related to the establishment of water-related category 2 centres, a new strategy for the UNESCO institutes and centres, as well as the water and IHP related components within the draft Programme and Budget for 2010-2011 (35 C/5 Draft).

INTRODUCTION

1. This document succinctly covers the water and IHP related issues addressed during the 180th (30 September-17 October 2008) and 181st (14 – 30 April 2009) sessions of the Executive Board, and the preparations for the 182nd session of the Executive Board (7-23 September 2009) and the 35th session of the UNESCO General Conference (6-23 October 2009). In particular, this document includes decisions related to the establishment of water-related category 2 centres, the preparations for a new strategy for the UNESCO institutes and centres, as well as the water and IHP related components within the draft Programme and Budget for 2010-2011 (35 C/5 Draft).

EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISIONS (180TH AND 181ST SESSIONS)

2. The 180th session of the Executive Board welcomed the proposal of the Government of the Dominican Republic to establish in its territory a centre for the sustainable management of water resources in the Caribbean island states under the auspices of UNESCO (180 EX/Decision 19 part I).

3. At the same session and among other aspects, the Executive Board has noted that access to safe drinking water is of vital importance for achieving Millennium Development Goals 1 and 7, underlining in this context the valuable contribution being made by UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme (IHP). The Board has also underlined the need to reinforce UNESCO's leading role in the scientific aspects of freshwater research, capacity-building and education, including the important roles of IHP, UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education and the World Assessment Programme (WWAP). Therefore, the Board has recommended that the Director-General, in drawing up document 35 C/5 for Major Programme II, take into account the programme priorities emphasized by the National Commissions during the regional consultations, by Member States in their replies to the Director-General's questionnaire on the preparation of document 35 C/5, and by Member States at the 180th session of the Executive Board, and especially the following key priorities:

- strengthening the role of science for sustainable development through fostering policies and capacity-building in science, technology and innovation;
- supporting the work of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) in improving the governance, management and protection of ocean and coastal areas;
- addressing climate change through the lead role of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission in building the knowledge base and through contributions by other UNESCO scientific programmes;
- supporting the work of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) in promoting the sustainable use of fresh water;
- promoting science education and teacher training;
- capacity-building in all areas of UNESCO's competence in natural sciences, including for disaster preparedness and mitigation.

4. The document containing the official resolutions of the 181st session of the Executive Board are not available at the time of preparation of this report but will be provided to IHP Bureau members during the 43rd session of the Bureau. At its 181st session, the Board welcomed the proposals for the establishment of the following centres under the auspices of UNESCO and recommended its approval by the 35th session of the General Conference:

- HidroEx – International Centre for Education, Capacity-building and Applied Research in Water (Brazil);
- The International Centre of Water Resources and Global Change (Germany); and
- The International Centre on Coastal Ecohydrology (Portugal).

5. While addressing items not exclusively concerned with IHP, the Executive Board has also focused on a new strategy for UNESCO category 2 centres and a new publication and distribution plan for the Organization. As a follow-up to 34 C/Resolution 90, which authorized the Executive Board to adopt and apply an integrated comprehensive strategy for category 2 centres and to submit the strategy to the General Conference at its 35th session for approval, a proposed strategy was presented in document 180 EX/18 to the 180th session of the Executive Board. Pursuant to the corresponding decision, the Director-general invited Member States to submit written comments on the proposed draft integrated comprehensive strategy and this item was included in the agenda of its 181st session. A revised proposed strategy was presented to the 181st session of the Executive Board (181 EX/INF.13) and was approved by the Board, which recommended that the “General Conference, at its 35th session adopt the strategy [to be applied] to all new proposals for establishment of category 2 institutes and centres, as well as in the renewal of existing agreements”. This strategy acknowledges IHP’s own strategy for the category 2 centres strategy. Some of the main immediate and medium term implications for IHP are:

- The agreement for the establishment of a category 2 institute shall be concluded for a definite time period, not exceeding six years.
- At least six months prior to the expiration of the agreement, the Director-General will carry out a review of the activities of the institutes and of the contribution to the Strategic Programme Objectives of the Organization and the Strategy for category 2 institutes and centres approved by the General Conference. He will include the results of this review in his report to the Executive Board on the execution of the Programme. In this context, some of the existing water centres will need to be reviewed shortly.
- The activities of category 2 institutes and centres must be global, regional, subregional or interregional in scope. These institutes and centres could be sponsored and supported by one Member State or by a broad coalition of Member States. Entities with a national scope only do not qualify for designation as category 2 institutes and centres.
- UNESCO’s programme sectors shall prepare specific sector strategies for engagement and interaction with relevant category 2 centres and institutes on specific themes.
- Directors of all category 2 institutes and centres shall be required to submit to UNESCO a biennial report with information on activities performed under the scope of the agreement including those in collaboration with field office or offices in whose geographical area they are active as well as with National Commissions for UNESCO, if applicable.
- The Director-General shall designate, from within existing staff resources, a global focal point for issues pertaining to category 2 institutes and centres to be responsible, *inter alia*, for (a) a biennial mapping of all category 2 institutes and centres; (b) monitoring the preparation of the sectoral strategies and providing backstopping to sectors as needed; (c) maintaining a central database for all category 2 entities; (d) providing information to Member States; and (e) implementing the global comprehensive communication plan for category 2 institutes and centres.
- The Director-General is invited to establish sectoral review committees should he consider this appropriate, as is envisaged by the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), to assess the contribution and impact of an institute/centre and to recommend its continued association or a discontinuation of the category 2 designation.
- There is no agreed process for category 2 institute or centre to convert to a category 1 institute or centre.

6. With regards to the publication and distribution plan, this item was discussed at the 181st session of the Executive Board (see 181 EX/39 and Corr.), with several points of relevance for IHP's Publications Strategy. The publications and distributions plans need to (1) be submitted to the Executive Board at the spring session immediately following each General Conference, and in line with the budget approved, and should be made available online. The Executive Board has asked to promote linguistic diversity in the Publication and Distribution Plan 2010-2011 by ensuring that language versions are systematically planned and approved according to the type and reach of each publication and also by seeking low-cost solutions for the distribution of works, such as the developing of partnerships or co-licensing agreements with local publishers. This is in line IHP's existing partnerships with publishers. The Executive Board has asked the Director-General to finalize the comprehensive methodological framework for the evaluation of publications and to ensure the establishment of a coherent distribution policy throughout the Organization. In the light of recent Executive Board decisions, it is important to consider document IHP/Bur-XLIII/11 on the "Report of the IHP Publication Committee".

PREPARATIONS FOR THE 182nd SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

7. The 182nd session of the Executive Board may consider the proposals for the establishment of the following water-related centres under the auspices of UNESCO, upon the timely receipt of a full proposal by the IHP Secretariat and the conclusion of the feasibility study and the draft agreement:

- The International Centre for Integrated Water Resources Management (ICIWaRM) (United States of America);
- The Regional Centre of International Training and Research on Sediment, Isotope and Erosion Techniques (Turkey);
- The Central Asian Regional Glaciological Centre (Republic of Kazakhstan);
- Asia Pacific Centre for Ecohydrology (APCE) (Indonesia);
- Sustainable Water Engineering & Management (SWEM) Centre (Thailand).

PREPARATIONS FOR THE 35th SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

8. The 35th session of the General Conference will consider the proposals for the establishment of the water-related centres under the auspices of UNESCO that were endorsed by the Executive Board at its 180th, 181st and 182nd sessions, which are listed in the previous sections.

9. The General Conference will also decide on the adoption of the Programme and Budget for 2010-2011 (35 C/5). In its current format, the draft 35 C/5 includes a draft resolution that authorizes the Director-General to implement the plan of action for Major Programme II (MP II), structured around two biennial sectoral priorities (BSPs) and four main lines of action (MLAs) and correspondent expected results (with performance indicators and benchmarks presented in the draft C/5 but omitted in this report), the ones concerned with IHP being:

- *"Biennial sectoral priority 2: Sustainable management of freshwater, ocean and terrestrial resources as well as disaster preparedness and mitigation [...]*
(iv) support the execution of the seventh phase of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), including through its crosscutting and specialized projects (HELP, FRIEND, G-WADI, ISARM, PCCP and IFI), and enhanced coordination with the IHP National Committees, the category 1 institute UNESCO-IHE, the water-related institutes and centres under UNESCO auspices (category 2) and UNESCO chairs; strengthen scientific approaches for improved water management policies and governance, particularly in arid and semi-arid zones and in urban systems; enhance water-related

technical capacity-building and education at all levels; provide approaches for adapting to the impacts of global changes on river basins and aquifers; and actively contribute to and strengthen global monitoring, reporting and assessment of freshwater resources through the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP), with particular attention to sub-Saharan Africa; [...]

- *Main line of action 3: Promoting the sustainable management and conservation of freshwater, terrestrial resources and biodiversity as well as disaster resilience*

[...]

(9.) Knowledge base of the processes of the hydrological cycle, including river basins, aquifer systems and ecosystems strengthened;

(10.) Member States assisted in strengthening policies for water governance and management in river basins, urban systems, arid and semi-arid zones, including groundwater and shared waters;

(11.) Water-related capacities reinforced, including through education at all levels, with an emphasis on Africa and gender mainstreaming; [...]

- *Expected results at the end of the biennium:*

[...]

Expected result 9: Knowledge base of the processes of the hydrological cycle, including river basins, aquifer systems and ecosystems strengthened

Expected result 10: Member States assisted in strengthening policies for water governance and management in river basins, urban systems, arid and semi-arid zones, including groundwater and shared waters

Expected result 11: Water-related capacities reinforced, including through education at all levels, with an emphasis on Africa and gender mainstreaming"

10. The budget for IHP is included as a component of MLA 3 "Promoting the sustainable management and conservation of freshwater, terrestrial resources and biodiversity as well as disaster resilience". The budget proposed for MLA 3 foresees USD\$10,452,900 for activities and USD\$18,538,800 for staff costs, resulting in a total of USD\$28,991,700 for the regular budget component of MLA 3, which is complemented by USD\$23,199,300 from extrabudgetary sources that include WWAP. While it is evident that MLA 3 has the largest proportion of the regular budget allocated to MP II, this main line of action lacks specificity and clarity as IHP budget is merged with the budget of MAB, IGCP and UNESCO's activities on disaster resilience unrelated to water. In particular, reinstatement of funds to IHP to reach the levels comparable to that of 33 C/5 is not evident in the draft 35 C/5 and the fact that IHP has one of the highest activities per staff budget ratio – with more funds allocated to implement activities than for staffing costs – is not explicitly visible due to the merger of the budget of several scientific programmes.

11. The draft 35 C/5 also includes a draft resolution for the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education (UNESCO-IHE). In this resolution it is cited the resolution of the 18th session of the Intergovernmental Council of IHP to establish a UNESCO Tertiary Water Education Grants Programme and invites Member States to provide direct support to this programme, thus contributing also to further strengthen the links between IHP and UNESCO-IHE. In this draft resolution, the General Conference will, among other issues:

- *"Request the Governing Board of UNESCO-IHE to continue and intensify its efforts to:*

(a) further strengthen cooperation with the IHP in implementing UNESCO's overall water and sustainable development programme, with special emphasis on the Organization's two global priorities, Africa and gender equality, and on the needs of

- youth, LCDs and SIDS as well as those of the most vulnerable segments of society, including indigenous people;*
- (b) contribute to the water education thematic programme of the UN DESD, including the implementation of a water education and training needs assessment and the organization of a regional workshop for Europe and North-America on this theme; [...]*
- (h) strengthen linkages with water-related category 2 centres, in particular within the framework of UNESCO's overall strategy for water-related category 1 and 2 institutes and centres; [...]*
- *Appeal to Member States to make voluntary contributions to UNESCO-IHE and in particular to the "UNESCO Tertiary Water Education Grants Programme", thus demonstrating that Member States are committed to water education and capacity-building and are willing to play a part in ensuring that category 1 institutes can operate in the long term entirely on extrabudgetary funding."*