

Dear reader,

This newsletter is to inform you about programmes, results and events in the field of integrated water resources management. This newsletter will be published every month.

If you have any information you would like to share through this newsletter, please mail to: <mailto:info@iwac-riza.org>.

The International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC) is the collaborating centre on integrated water resources management under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes of the [United Nations Economic Commission for Europe \(UNECE\)](#). The Institute for Inland Water Management and Waste Water Treatment ([RIZA](#)) in Lelystad, Netherlands, hosts the centre.

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News

1. Fourth Meeting of the Parties to the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes Bonn, 20-22 November 2006

The Parties celebrated the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the UNECE Water Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes at their fourth Meeting in Bonn.

More than 120 participants gathered in Bonn from 20 to 22 November at the fourth Meeting of the Parties to the UNECE Water Convention, where they celebrated its tenth anniversary. During the first ten years from the entry into force, the Water Convention successfully enhanced transboundary water cooperation in the UNECE region. Also, the signature of the Protocol on Civil Liability, in 2003 and the entry into force of the Protocol on Water and Health, in 2005 strengthened the role played by the Convention in the protection of water resources and in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals on water and sanitation.

The spirit of the celebrations of the tenth anniversary inspired decisions on the way forward in the implementation of the Convention.

Parties adopted the *Strategies for Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters* which are based on the guidelines¹ already developed by the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment, and on the experience with their implementation in pilot projects. The Meeting also agreed to develop new pilot projects in South-Eastern Europe (SEE) and in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA).

A Preliminary assessment of transboundary rivers in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) and of selected lakes in the UNECE region was presented. The Parties reaffirmed that the assessment is an important tool to evaluate compliance with the Convention and progress achieved to protect and sustainably manage transboundary waters. As agreed at the previous meeting in 2003, the complete assessment of the status of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters in the UNECE Region will be submitted at the Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" in Belgrade, Serbia, in October 2007.

Parties, concerned with impact of natural disasters caused by extreme weather events, also adopted new *Model provisions on transboundary flood management*. The Model Provisions set out riparian countries' obligations that could be included in legal instruments on transboundary waters or on flood management. By adopting these provisions, riparian countries commit to exchange information, to cooperate in setting up warning and alarm systems and to develop a long-term flood-management strategy.

In addition, the fourth Meeting of the Parties adopted innovative tools and endorsed new initiatives in which the Water Convention will engage making a new way forward.

Parties, together with other countries and observers, participated in animated discussions on a new policy instrument: the *Recommendations on the payments for ecosystem services in integrated water resources management*. The Recommendations indicate measures to internalise costs and benefits of the services provided by water related ecosystems. The Recommendations will assist decision makers in making economically efficient, socially equitable and environmentally sustainable decisions. The Parties adopted the Recommendations and decided to develop pilot projects to test their application. Several countries, including Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, The Netherlands, Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Ukraine will take the lead in pioneering their implementation.

Parties also decided to focus their future joint work on water and climate change and to develop a strategy for the UNECE region on Water and Climate Adaptation. The Strategy will address possible impacts of

¹ Guidelines on Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Groundwaters (MP.WAT/2000/9), the Guidelines on Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Rivers (MP.WAT/2000/10), and the Guidelines on Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary and International Lakes (MP.WAT/2003/10).

climate change on flood and drought occurrences, health related aspects as well as practical ways to cope with the transboundary impacts through adaptation.

Another innovative decision of the Meeting was the involvement of the Convention and its secretariat in the development of National Policy Dialogues in EECCA countries in the framework of the EU Water Initiative. The National Policy Dialogues will assist countries to develop integrated water management plans, analyze water reform needs, identify priorities and define action plans to attain the agreed targets through a participatory process. The first policy dialogue will be launched in Moldova.

For more information, please consult <http://www.unece.org/env/water/>

2. New software for the monitoring of environment (9 October 2006)

The Finnish Technical Research Centre (VTT) has developed a software framework for environmental monitoring applications using data from satellite images as well as geographic information. This software framework enables various applications: the natural disaster monitoring system, the monitoring of forest resource, the monitoring of maritime resource and the monitoring of seasonal phenomena such as the development of "ruska" (autumn colouring) in northern Finland. These various applications have been designed to enhance operative environment within users' organisations.

More information: <http://www.vtt.fi/whatsnew/2006/20061009.jsp?lang=en>

3. Climate Change may affect Delivery of WFD objectives

The European Water Framework Directive (WFD) aims to achieve good status for all European waters by 2015. It establishes a framework for water management and policy based on the principle of integrated river basin management. The possible direct and indirect impacts of climate change on freshwater ecosystems are not well understood and have received relatively little attention to date. In particular, the Directive does not mention risks posed by climate change to the achievement of its environmental objectives. Nevertheless, the time scale for its implementation process extends into the 2020s, when climate models predict changes in temperatures and precipitations.

A group of British researchers has recently assessed the main risks posed to the delivery of the WFD's objectives by climate change from a UK perspective. The scientists first reviewed the latest UK climate change projections and the policy and science context of the WFD. Thereafter, they examined the potential risks of climate change to key phases of the river basin management process that supports the WFD, such as the characterisation of river basins and their water bodies, programmes of measures, monitoring, or associated management activities.

The results of the analysis suggest that climate change has the potential to impact specific aspects of the WFD, including:

- Prevention of deterioration in the status of water bodies. Changes in the flow regime and physical-chemistry conditions in rivers could have significant impacts on key species, which in turn would affect the ecological status, particularly in the protected water bodies. Moreover, global warming may promote the deterioration of some water bodies, such as wetlands, that are sensitive to changes in the water balance.
- Achievement of good ecological status. With climate change, good surface water quality may become harder to achieve in some areas at specific times of the year, while elsewhere there may be a deterioration of status. For example, severe droughts in the summer could have long-term impacts on fish populations as associated increased temperatures, reduction in dissolved oxygen and low flow conditions increase fish mortality.
- Achievement of good groundwater status. Coastal aquifers may be threatened by saline intrusion linked to rising sea levels. Increasing demand during hot summers would increase water extraction thus reducing the potential for groundwater recharge.
- Halting the discharge of priority hazardous substances into surface waters. Some hazardous substances stored in contaminated sediments may potentially be mobilised under high river flow conditions resulting from increased heavy winter precipitation.
- Programme of measures options, appraisal and implementation. Climate change may lead to land use practices/crop types with a significantly different water needs. If the risks posed by climate change are not taken into account, the timing and cost of an adapted response may be adversely affected.

The authors conclude that the WFD provides new opportunities for linking policy and participative mechanisms introduced for river basin management plans to the emerging climate change adaptation policies on a national and regional scale. They also highlight that new guidance, typologies and screening tools would be needed to identify which water bodies are most vulnerable to climate change.

(R.L. Wilby, H.G.Orr, M. Hedger, D. Forrow and M. Blackmore (2006) «Risks posed by climate change to the delivery of Water Framework Directive objectives in the UK », Environment International, 32: 1043-1055).

Source: Science for Environment Policy, DG Environment News Alert Service,
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/research_alert_en.htm

4. United Nations Climate Change Conference concluded with decisions to support developing countries

The United Nations Climate Change Conference concluded on Friday 17 November, with the adoption of a wide range of decisions designed to mitigate climate change and help countries adapt to the effects of global warming. The conference that took place in Nairobi, Kenya, from 6 to 17 November was attended by around 6,000 participants.

At the meeting, activities for the next few years under the 'Nairobi Work Programme on Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation' were agreed. These activities will help enhance decision-making on adaptation action and improved assessment of vulnerability and adaptation to climate change. Other important outcomes were the agreement on the management of the Adaptation Fund under the Kyoto Protocol and the finalization of the rules concerning the Special Climate Change Fund. The Adaptation Fund draws on proceeds generated by the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and is designed to support concrete adaptation activities in developing countries. The Special Climate Change Fund is designed to finance projects in developing countries relating to adaptation, technology transfer, climate change mitigation and economic diversification for countries highly dependent on income from fossil fuels. The next round of negotiations under the Kyoto Protocol and talks under the United Nations Climate Change Convention (UNFCCC) will be held in Bonn, Germany in May 2007.

Read more: Decisions and conclusions adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention (COP 12) and the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP/MOP 2)

http://unfccc.int/meetings/cop_12/items/3754.php

5. Job Vacancy: UN-Water Decade Office on Capacity Development Director

Deadline for submission of applications: 10 December 2006

UN-WADOC, a Bonn-based UN-Water office that will be established in 2007 for the International Decade for Action 'Water for Life', will address all water-related issues concerning education, training, and other forms of knowledge transfer and the question of institutional/legal capacity developments towards integrated water resources management and sustainable development.

The director of UN-WADOC will be responsible for the conception, planning, organization, implementation and administration of the activities of the Office. He/she will report to the Chair of UN-Water concerning matters related to programme implementation. Required qualifications include a strong background in human and institutional capacity building for a minimum of 15 years and a proven record of effective leadership and management experience at senior level, preferably in developing countries.

Read more: <http://www.ehs.unu.edu/index.php/article:269>

6. Job vacancy: Professor in hydro-informatics at UNESCO-IHE

Deadline for submission of applications: 8 January 2007

The UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education is looking for a professor in hydro-informatics to lead the hydro-informatics scientific core group in different international activities related to education, research and capacity-building projects.

The candidate should meet the following criteria:

- international reputation in hydro-informatics research and application
- scientific achievements in the field of hydro-informatics demonstrated through high-quality publications in international peer-reviewed journals and at scientific conferences
- PhD degree in hydro/environmental science and engineering, or in applied information/communication technologies
- at least 5 (preferably 10) years of post-doctoral experience in academia or industry

- experience in hydro-informatics education at post-graduate level and good didactic qualities
- excellent English language skills (written and spoken) and preferably one additional international language such as French or Spanish.

More information: <http://www.unesco-ihe.org/vacancy/profhikm.htm>

Conferences

7. River Basin Management 2007, 23-25 May 2007, Kos, Greece

Organizer: Wessex Institute of Technology, United Kingdom

In recent years, significant advances have been made in the development and application of hydroinformatics software tools for predicting flow, water quality, sediment transport and ecological processes in riverine systems. This conference will provide a forum for practitioners and academia to highlight the latest developments in this field and to discuss the experience of applying such software tools to practical riverine problems.

The conference will aim to communicate recent advances in the overall management of riverine systems, including advances in hydraulic and hydrologic modelling, environmental protection and flood forecasting.

More information: http://www.unesco.org/water/water_events/Detailed/1389.shtml

8. 13th World Water Congress, 1-4 September 2008, Montpellier, France

Organizer: International Water Resources Association (IWRA)

The main theme of this congress will be 'Global Changes and Water Resources: Confronting the Expanding and Diversifying Pressures.' The congress aims to enhance knowledge and raise global consciousness of the impact of global changes on water resources. The main themes of the congress are:

- water availability, use and management
- towards the future: water resources and global changes
- climate change and disasters
- development of water resources and infrastructure
- water governance and water security: 30 years after the UN Conference on water, Mar del Plata, Argentina of 1977
- water conservation and demand management
- financing water development and capacity building
- capacity-building in developing countries.

More information: http://www.unesco.org/water/water_events/Detailed/1406.shtml

Publications

9. D.P. Loucks and E. van Beek, 2006. Water Resources Systems Planning and Management - an introduction to methods, models and applications

This book gives an introduction to a state-of-the-art overview of the use of quantitative methods for identifying and evaluating alternative water resources management plans and policies. It presents ways of obtaining useful information for managing the world's vital water resources. The book aims to serve water resources engineers and planners as a useful guide but can also be used by university students and teachers. The book is accompanied by a CD containing many exercises and software.

The book may be ordered from the publisher UNESCO but can also be downloaded free of charge.

More information: <http://www.wldelft.nl/rnd/intro/fields/water-management/book.html>

10. S. Nilsson, 2006. Managing water according to river basins: Information management, institutional arrangements and strategic policy support - with focus on the EU Water Framework Directive. (PhD thesis)

Today, there is a general notion that water resources are best managed according to their river basins. River basin management may be approached from a wide variety of angles. This thesis focuses on information management, institutional arrangements and strategic policy support, with special reference to the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD). The overall objective is to examine strategies, possibilities and

hindrances for river basin management, with the ultimate goal of identifying key aspects to be considered - and prioritised - for "successful" European water management and WFD implementation. An assessment of the information management of three transboundary water regimes in Europe showed that a technical/scientific paradigm appears to dominate in river basin accords. This is visible, for example, in the data collection, which is dominated by state and environmental impact information, and the use of passive channels for communicating with stakeholders and other interest groups. The studies addressing institutional arrangements for river basin management according to the WFD showed that the implementation level of the directive is relatively low – both at national and international levels. For instance, competent authorities have not been established (strictly) according to the borders of the established River Basin District (RBDs). Further, in international RBDs, the ambitions and plans for cooperation vary considerably. Despite the general low implementation level, steps have still been taken in the "direction" of river basin management. At the national level, all examined countries have established RBDs according to river basins, and at the international level, joint river basin management plans will probably be coordinated for a majority of river basins shared by EU Member States. However, the same pattern could not be discerned for river basins extending outside the borders of the EU. In order to support strategic policy making on issues related to the implementation of the WFD, two assessments were made, one addressing international co-operation and water quality in the Baltic Sea Region, and one encompassing rankings of all the newly established RBDs based on a number of identical indicators. Although there is a need to refine these assessments, they may be regarded as simple – but yet robust – models for bench-marking.

More information: <http://www.diva-portal.org/kth/theses/abstract.xsql?dbid=4183>

11. Hydro-hegemony - a framework for analysis of transboundary conflicts. Mark Zeitoun, Jeroen Warner, *Water policy* 8 (5, 2006) : 435-460

The increasing structural and physical scarcity of water across the globe calls for a deeper understanding of trans-boundary water conflicts. Conventional analysis tends to downplay the role that power asymmetry plays in creating and maintaining situations of water conflict that fall short of the violent form of war and to treat as unproblematic situations of cooperation occurring in an asymmetrical context. The conceptual Framework of Hydro-Hegemony presented herein attempts to give these two features – power and varying intensities of conflict – their respective place in the perennial and deeply political question: who gets how much water, how and why? Hydro-hegemony is hegemony at the river basin level, achieved through water resource control strategies such as resource capture, integration and containment.

More information: <http://www.iwaponline.com/wp/00805/wp008050435.htm>

12. FIIA publication "EU-Russia relations"

In a new publication by the Finnish Institute of International Affairs, researcher Sergei Medvedev considers the future of the relations between the European Union and Russia. Despite all the summitry and energy trade, the relations are at the moment in a stalemate. The EU is dissatisfied by Putin's authoritarian drift, while Moscow regards the EU as a bureaucratic enterprise bent on isolating Russia from Europe.

In the FIIA Report "EU-Russian Relations: Alternative futures", Medvedev introduces a set of alternative scenarios of EU-Russian relations. He comes to the conclusion that the most likely scenario for the next few years is stagnation. Both sides will be preoccupied with domestic development, and will pursue a policy of damage limitation vis-à-vis each other. Finally, the author introduces some thoughts on how to break the gridlock in EU-Russian relations. To engage in a fruitful dialogue, Russia needs to question its cherished modernist "sovereignty", while Brussels needs to rethink its neo-imperialist discourse of "Europeanization."

The report can be downloaded as a PDF-document on the FIIA homepage at: http://www.upi-fii.fi/doc/FIIA_Report_15.pdf

13. "Transboundary water resources in Southern Africa : conflict or cooperation?" Anthony R. Turton, Marian J. Patrick and Frédéric Julien, *Development* 49 (3, 2006) : 22-31

Literature suggests a linkage between internationally shared water resources and conflict potential. Anthony R. Turton, Marian J. Patrick and Frédéric Julien examine transboundary water resource management in southern Africa, showing that empirical evidence indicates a propensity to cooperation. They use the Hydropolitical Complex concept to explain why states might choose cooperation over conflict where a critical shared resource could limit future development potential.

More information: <http://www.palgrave-journals.com/development/index.html>

14. I. Kagalou, G. Economidis, I. Leonardos and C. Papaloukas, 2006 Assessment of a Mediterranean shallow lentic ecosystem (Lake Pamvotis, Greece) using benthic community diversity: Response to environmental parameters. *Limnologica - Ecology and Management of Inland Waters* 36(4):269-278

Macroinvertebrates play a key role in freshwater lentic and lotic ecosystems. The macroinvertebrate benthic community of a shallow Mediterranean lake (Lake Pamvotis, NW Greece) was studied. The benthic assemblage was sampled monthly at five sites during a period of 1 year (Apr. 1998–Mar. 1999). In addition hypolimnetic water quality variables were monitored over the same period at each site. The aim of the study was (a) to describe the intra-annual and spatial variability in benthic communities, (b) to relate possible community changes to environmental conditions and (c) to evaluate the responses of the lake's ecological status on community indices. The benthic fauna of Lake Pamvotis was found to be very limited with a total of 10 species belonging to five taxonomic groups. The oligochaete community comprised 80% of the total benthic fauna with *Potamothrix bavaricus* as a new record for the Lake Pamvotis and *Potamothrix hammoniensis*, being the dominant benthic species represented more than 61% of the total benthic fauna. *Chironomus plumosus* was the most abundant chironomid species contributing with about 6% of the total benthic fauna, and *Chaoborus flavicans* with 19% was the important dipteran. Almost all benthic species showed the same intra-annual seasonal pattern, with peak population densities during spring and early summer except *P. hammoniensis* which predominated during the whole sampling period. Dissolved oxygen and temperature seemed to be the main environmental factors affecting community indices. Benthic communities are affected by human disturbances in Lake Pamvotis shifting their composition to more tolerant taxa, reflecting also the eutrophic to hypertrophic character of the lake. More information: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi=B7GX1-4M69JCK-1&_coverDate=12%2F08%2F2006&_alid=494278814&_rdoc=1&_fmt=&_orig=search&_qd=1&_cdi=20473&_sort=d&_view=c&_acct=C000050221&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=10&md5=9467d2b93e7110122e2aedb684de6b6b

15. F.A. Ward, 2007. Decision support for water policy: a review of economic concepts and tools *Water Policy* 9(1):1–31

This article reviews research on the application of economic concepts and tools to the analysis of the preservation, conservation, development, consumption, supply and allocation of water resources. It summarizes research on economic analysis to support policy formulation, implementation and evaluation, including both project appraisal and the design of institutions. Economic analysis can support ex post analysis of existing mechanisms that influence the allocation of water: Such mechanisms include laws, regulations, supply management, demand management, population and climate change. Economic analysis can also be used to conduct ex ante analysis to design future water allocation institutions. These institutions include various forms of marginal cost pricing, valuation of water in alternative uses, water quality management, optimization models, integrated supply and demand management, transboundary management, virtual water, decentralized management, common property institutions and watershed councils.

More information: <http://www.iwaponline.com/wp/00901/wp009010001.htm>

16. A.K. Gerlak, 2007. Lesson learning and trans-boundary waters: a look at the Global Environment Facility's international waters program. *Water Policy* 9(1):55–72

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) aims to assist countries in better understanding the functioning of their international water systems and developing an appreciation of how sectoral activities have an impact on the environment. By funding the transaction costs of the learning processes necessary to gain a better understanding of these ecosystems, the GEF hopes countries will collaborate with their neighbors to reach effective solutions collectively. This paper explores lessons learned from GEF efforts concerning trans-boundary water resources. It investigates GEF efforts in (1) creating a shared vision, (2) involving the public and private sectors, (3) coordinating program activities, (4) building governance institutions and capacity, and (5) improving the ecosystem. These lessons reveal relative success in creating a shared vision and building governance institutions and capacity for trans-boundary waters but uncovers significant obstacles in the other areas.

More information: <http://www.iwaponline.com/wp/00901/wp009010055.htm>

17. New Human Development Report: 'Beyond Scarcity: Power, Poverty and the Global Water Crisis'

This year's Human Development Report (HDR, 2006), launched on 9 November in Cape Town, South Africa, is subtitled 'Beyond Scarcity: Power, Poverty and the Global Water Crisis'. This report focuses on the growing water and sanitation crisis that causes nearly two million child deaths every year. It complements and reaffirms the message of the 2nd UN World Water Development Report that poverty, unequal access, wars, migration and unsustainable consumption patterns are the leading causes of the water crisis rather than just scarcity of freshwater resources.

To accompany the launch of this year's HDR, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is organizing the H2O Virtual Knowledge Fair, a fair on water with a focus on the regions of Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East and Northern Africa. The Fair will be online on 15-17 November and will include 3 live discussion forums and multimedia presentations.

HDR 2006: 'Beyond Scarcity: Power, Poverty and the Global Water Crisis' <http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006/>
H2O Virtual Knowledge Fair <http://www.waterfair.org/index.spring>

18. Water Governance for Development and Sustainability By Miguel Solanes and Andrei Jouravlev. © United Nations, 2006.

This document aims to identify the characteristics of water institutions which promote the sustainable integration of water, both as a resource and as service, into socioeconomic development. As this does not depend only on formal institutional factors, such as legislation and organizational structures, there are also references to dynamic conditions, such as socioeconomic circumstances and the quality of the administration, summarized in the concept of governance, understood as the capability of a social system to mobilize energies, in a coherent manner, for the sustainable development of water resources.

:: Access the full document [PDF format – 445 KB]
<http://www.eclac.org/publicaciones/xml/0/26200/lcl2556e.pdf>

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With kind regards,
Jos Timmerman
Daphne Willems
International Water Assessment Centre
<http://www.iwac-unece.org/>