



International Waters: Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW:LEARN)

First Quarter 2005

Progress Report

In 2005 Q1, GEF IW:LEARN --

- * Launched 4 e-learning forums for XXX participants in international aquifers, lakes, rivers and large-marine ecosystems.
- * Deployed the Southeast Asia Regional Learning Center portal (<http://www.iwsea.org>) for IW learning and knowledge sharing.
- * Disseminated results from its 2004 freshwater and marine learning events (Bangkok) and IWRM (Tokyo) learning event.

A more detailed accounting of ongoing developments for specific IW:LEARN activities is presented below.

Component A -- UNEP (Sean Khan)

A1 IW-IMS

A1.1 - IW IMS Development

A1.1.1 - IW IMS specifications

- Alpha site of the IW-IMS is currently under development and a test site has been established at: <http://157.150.113.5:8080/iwlearn>
- Considerable debugging and testing in progress. Overall progress is positive and inline with related user feedback. The beta rollout of the IW-IMS is expected May 2005.

A1.1.2 - IW ICT Needs Assessment

- An ICT needs assessment has been successfully conducted between October 2004 and February 2005. Analysis of responses is currently being carried out. In general, this assessment is the 1st of an ongoing effort to identify and respond to the needs of the GEF IW community and represents an excellent first step. The survey appears to have yield many useful observations and will be widely shared during the IWC. Responses and draft analysis has been submitted to the PCU for input.

A.1.2 Regional/thematic modules

... *Ground water module*

- UNEP/UNESCO-IGRAC activity to contribute to a Ground water module for the IWRC is not going as planned. Considerable difficulty in obtaining agreement with UNESCO-IGRAC on the Terms of Reference. Essentially, UNEP wishes to simply link the UNESCO-IGRAC Information system to the IW:LEARN IWRC and utilize UNESCO-IGRAC expertise to acquire and jet useful content based on the GEF IW needs.

[UNESCO adds:]

- The requirement for a separate IAA with UNEP emerged late and is delayed with the priority need to finalize this agreement for CS
- UNESCO/IHP and IGRAC has started and is delivering the works in accordance with the ToRs and the project work plan as:
 - A GEF-IW Groundwater Forum has been established and is available at the IGRAC web- site. About twenty of the e-fora (see 2 below) participants are subscribed also to the IGRAC GEF-IW Groundwater Forum. The GEF-IW Groundwater Forum is scheduled to continue the Groundwater Structured Learning switching from the E-fora after the IWC3.
 - IGRAC is working on the Digital Aquifer Environment Toolkit for the purpose of accommodating information on the five GEFIW groundwater projects, including, in addition to the Discussion Forum Environment: A Meta information Database and the Collaborative Environment;

... Project module - pending completion of IW-IMS

- Created a schema for project information based on the AiDA format. Following release of a stable version of the IW-IMS in May 05, all existing content of the IWRC (i.e. <http://www.iwlearn.net>) will be imported into the new platform. Ongoing dialogue with GEFSEC on linkage with GEF Online database in principle is in agreement at the technical level and will be realized after technology development is ready.

... Experiences module -- pending completion of IW-IMS

- An extension to the "eco-insight" data entry form is being discussed with John Pernetta and applied toward the knowledge brief on project management.
- Conclusion of this pilot will provide input towards the elements needed to have an effective repository and outreach mechanism for "knowledge" products.

... News module -- pending completion of IW-IMS

... Other Modules (max 4 over life of project) --pending findings of user needs assessment.

A1.3 IW Help Desk

... Not yet started - pending completion of IW-IMS

A2 - Support and Training

A2.1 - IW Workshops

... Pending completion of IW-IMS, Planned for later this year perhaps in LAC

A2.2 - IT Project Network (95% of site connected by 2008)

... -- pending completed of IW-IMS

Other Matters:

Human resources -

- TORs for TCC (50% financed by UNEP) finalized and ready for distribution later.
- Technical Assistant (100% financed by UNEP) on board

Misc. -

- Development of a Media Kit on CD-Rom including archive of useful documents (e.g. TDA/SAP, etc) underway (expected May 05)
- Analysis of suitable ISPs to host and maintain UNEP Web service underway and agreement expected May 05. IWRC service will be moved onto that platform and maintain via sub-contract thereafter

Component B Structured Learning

B1 Regional Learning

B1.1 Caribbean Multi-Focal Learning (Janot)

- Approached OAS about assistance planning for possible workshop in conjunction w/IAD5; IAD5 planning process v. slow to get underway & OAS not in good
- Communicated w/Jamaicans re: IAD5.
- Contacted CEP about assistance planning for possible workshop in conjunction w/IAD5 since they're in Jamaica; positive response, Sean to follow up.
- Sean reviewed Carib 'consultative workshop & partnership process' Janot led for GPA as model for Inter-focal dialogue activity plan.
- Sean discussing strategy w/Ahmed; Sean & Janot agreed aiming for F2F workshop @ IAD5 not critical, may be better to look for another regional mtg, perhaps WWF4, to allow for better buy-in at institutional level before bringing projects together in a workshop.
- Proposed inviting Carib region Inter-focal IA leads and key project managers to planning lunch in Salvador; janot proposed initial guest list, Sean to refine.

B1.2 Africa -- ANBO, contract under review. (Janot)

B1.3 European Info Sharing/P2 Workshop -- UNECE with CTC-St. Petersburg (Dann/Natasha Alexeeva)

- June 8-10, 2005, St. Petersburg workshop location set
- Registration solicited with over 100 responses, expecting to accomodate at least 60.
- Agenda drafted.
- Roles and responsibilities defined across partners
- Defining target groups and perspective participants, sending out invitations begun
- Booked the conference facilities
- Started logistics arrangements
- Worked with visa invitations
- Ongoing administrative support – translations, communication etc.

B2 Water Body-Specific Learning

B2.1 Freshwater Ecosystems

B2.1.1 Aquifers - UNESCO contract pending UNOPS signature (signed & sent to UNESCO May 2).

- IAA is being progressing and estimated to be finalized for CS on approximately 30 April 2005;
- Launched the aquifer@iwlearn.net e-Forum on World Water Day 2005 (22 March).
- Finalizing the TORs for Activity A1.2 and Activity B2.1.1 with administration of two separate IAA's:
- The GEF Aquifers Structured Learning Community E-for a aquifer list started on 22 March 2005 – the participants in the aquifer list discussion group has grown to above 50, (on 7 April 2005) and with about 30 interventions including 3 updates from the UNESCO Facilitator.
- The UNESCO Facilitator has taken direct contacts with the aquifer project directors and other actors to stimulate an active exchange under the list especially from the aquifer projects and to ensure the participation and contributions of the project directors under the Track 3 groundwater break-out sessions in the upcoming IWC3.

B2.1.2 Lakes - LakeNet

- LakeNet staff have participated in teleconference calls with PALS to plan for and coordinate e-Forum activities and the IW Conference scheduled for June, 2005.
- Launched the lake@iwlearn.net e-Forum on World Water Day 2005 (22 March) with an introductory message from LakeNet to 30 participants. LakeNet also featured the IW:LEARN project on its website in connection with the e-Forum launch and established a page with links to information about the project:
<http://www.worldlakes.org/projects.asp?projectid=46>.
- Provided additional guidance to the e-Forum participants with a follow-up message to the group and one-on-one coaching with several participants.
- As of 15 April 2005, 14 of the 30 registered participants of the e-Forum have sent messages of introduction to the group. The second moderator's message is scheduled to be sent to the participants by 22 April 2005. It will encourage further discussion on priority topics for the IW Conference in June as well as a reminder to those who have not introduced themselves.
- David Barker reviewed the GEF Program Study for International Waters and prepared a summary which was distributed to PALS for reference in planning e-Forum dialogues and potential topics for discussion at the upcoming IW Conference.

B2.1.3 Rivers - IUCN/WANI contract pending PAL signature.

- Launched the river@iwlearn.net e-Forum on World Water Day 2005 (22 March).
- Produced learning need assessment questionnaire for Janot Mendler (used in Dakar, Senagal)
- Organized and co-facilitated IW-LEARN event during World Conservation Congress Bangkok (power point presentations available)
- Initiated networking activities (INBO, other IW LEARN partners) [November 2004]
- Prepared e-forum communication (ready to be sent when contract finalized)

B2.2 Marine Ecosystems

B2.2.1 Marine Ecosystems e-forum - IUCN/GMP

- Launched the IW:LEARN "Structured Learning" for Large Marine Ecosystems on March 22, 2005 to a e-list of nearly 100 LME practitioners.
- IW:LEARN LME webstory posted on IUCN main website, as well as IUCN Global Marine Program and IUCN-US websites.
- Fielded responses and introductions from 25 participants within two weeks of launch.

- Responded to some initial discussions on economic valuation, to be followed up in more depth.
- Initiated the identification of discussion themes and external experts/advisors.

B2.2.2 LME Training - URI contract pending PAL signature.

B2.3 Coral Reefs -- expected launch in 2006.

B3 Stakeholder Exchange Program (IW-XC)

- Agreed with PALs to introduce IW-XC program via e-fora during run-up to Salvador in early June
- Developed draft program management tracker and promotional materials for dissemination via IWRC and for distribution @ IWC
- Held discussions with TWINBASIN about co-financing and coordinating with IW-XC on calls for proposals, criteria and intake of applications;
- Agreed to provide draft materials for TWINBASIN to present and discuss at late May INBO mtg in Marrakech.
- TWINBASIN rep Alain Bernard invited to IWC; suggested that he & Janot try to coordinate participation in lake and groundwater & LME thematic sessions as well as river basins to announce joint program.

B4 P2 Training -- ELI

- 2005 Quarterly Work Plan finalized
- Final Learning Objectives prepared
- Identified several potential partners for both the research and workshop components of this project.
- ELI has been invited to participate and discuss its public participation work in the Fifth Inter-American Dialogue on Water Management, to be held in Jamaica in October 2005, and to represent the work it is doing on a Consultative Committee of the Americas that is being formed in preparation for the World Water Forum in Mexico City.
- ELI is continuing to seek funds from a variety of sources to raise the required match for this project. Currently, we have pending proposals at the U.S. State Department (for \$100,000); and at the McKnight Foundation (\$50,000). Additionally, the Global Development Alliance (GDA), a funding mechanism of USAID, has requested that ELI submit a proposal for \$150,000 to its African regional offices to support that portion of the project.
- ELI has begun to conduct its research to develop the materials for the training workshops in each of the three regions of focus in this project.
- The materials development has so far consisted of ongoing development of a workshop outline for the GEF IW conference in Brazil this June, and of a project brochure for dissemination at the same.
- In addition to soliciting the broad participation of a number of GEF IW projects in this work, ELI has been attempting to bring in as many additional and complementary institutions and processes as possible.
- ELI may also be participating in the drafting team of a new book on water governance being produced by IUCN. ELI would be the lead drafter on public participation and would be able to widely publicize and validate the experiences of Activity B4 through this work.

Component C IW Conferences

C1 IW Conference 3 (Jennifer Jones @ GETF)

- For the upcoming Global Environment Facility International Waters Conference that will be held in Salvador, Bahia Brazil from June 20-25, 2005.
- Conducted on-going coordination with IW:LEARN and IWTF team members concerning the event logistics, agenda, session development and speaker identification, website, etc. Convened and participated in conference calls with IWTF Steering Committee members and IW:LEARN.
- Conducted coordinating discussions with the IWTF Steering Committee and UNDP representatives in Brasilia concerning the change in location, venue and timing for the 2005 IWC.
- Conducted coordination with UNDP's Maritza Ascencios of Frank Pinto's office and issued a second round of invitations for the 2005 IWC to announce the new venue of Salvador and the June 20-25, 2005 meeting dates. Monitored registration (including on-line registration and hotel sleeping block reservations) for the IWC. Conducted follow up to ensure that invitees received notification of the venue change.
- Conducted on-going coordination with UNOPS representatives including Margaret Chi and Fatou Diarra concerning the government sponsored participants for the IWC.
- Updated the event website to reflect the change in venue.
- Worked with the Le Meridien Hotel in Rio de Janeiro concerning the cancellation of the IWC originally scheduled for March 13-18, 2005. Conducted on-going coordination with Le Meridien Hotel to ensure that participant sleeping room reservations were cancelled and that the participants received cancellation confirmation.
- Revised the comprehensive event budget based on the site survey and selection of a new venue for the IWC.
- Conducted a comprehensive site selection survey of alternative venues (Pestana Bahia in Salvador and Bourbon and International in Foz) and initiated negotiations with potential venues to secure competitive rates, contract terms, etc.
- Conducted a site visit to Salvador and Brasilia to support advance logistical planning and venue room assignments at the Pestana Bahia Hotel, meet with potential vendors and local officials (head of security, Mayor's office, State Secretary for the Environment, Salvador Convention and Visitors Bureau, etc.) to secure local and in-country support for the IWC. Conducted on-going discussions with vendors to support the exhibit hall, audio visual and special events (boat trip, private dinner, etc.) requirements for the IWC. Held discussions with partners concerning support for the IWC.
- Worked with IW:LEARN principals to coordinate conference calls for the Project Activity Leaders (PALs) that will be facilitating the Thematic Breakout sessions at the IWC.
- Updated the IWC database and assigned thematic track participation for the project representatives in preparation for the E-Forum launch.
- Developed framework and specifications for the exhibit area for IW project activities. Coordinated with Janot Mandler concerning the Gender and Water Exhibit that will be debuted at the IWC and the Black Sea project representatives concerning the Sea Shell Palace that will be displayed.
- Coordinated with IW:LEARN principals concerning the development of a project summary template and prepared summaries to be issued for project managers review.
- Continued efforts to develop sponsorship support from companies including Coca Cola, Inogen, IBM, Dow, CHESF, Electrobras, Petrobras, Itaipu, etc.
- Conducted outreach to water policy representatives with the U.S. Department of State and Environmental Protection Agency.
- Participated in discussions and on-going coordination with representatives of the Brazilian Host Committee and other in-country partners

Component D Innovation

D1 Southeast Asia Regional Learning Center -- SEA START RC

- The SEA-RLC website/portal is now online (<http://www.iwsea.org>) - we have a new server (and backup machine) and have developed the site using the open source Zope and Plone software (the same software being used by Sean at UNEP). Essentially I've completed much of the site's design (90+ percent complete) and it's now a matter of focusing more on the content.
- SEA-RLC's Computer System Specialist (Mr. Bovorn Siriampairat) was recently hired and started working with us on 4 April. Bovorn installed the Zope and Plone software, and will be involved with developing the various website modules (he is currently developing the language translation module) and also will help us address future GIS requirements.
- Considerable effort has focused on developing GIS resources for the project. The UN FAO office in Bangkok has asked us to help develop an online searchable GIS-based database of community-based and co-management sites in the Asia-Pacific region. There is significant potential here for us to become involved with the GIS component of the Bay of Bengal LME Project which is expected to become operational later this year. As with website development, we're focusing on open source software solutions for addressing GIS needs and to make these practicable for SEA-RLC stakeholders.

D2 GWP Mediterranean - contract pending signature.

D3 CSD/IWRM Roundtables

- Disseminated via iwlearn.net presentations from Tokyo IWRM sessions.
- Prepared for April CSD-13 workshop on TDA/SAP and IWRM (w/UNDP).

Component E Partnership and Outreach

E2 IW Contributions to Global TWM

E2.1 Side Events for GEF IW Outreach

- Posted outputs from Bangkok freshwater and marine learning events to iwlearn.net

E2.2 LME Video -- Francois Odendaal Productions

- Completed filming, began editing and scripting.

E2.3 Gender and Water Alliance Exhibition -- Gender and Water Alliance

- GWA contract dates and deliverables adjusted so UNOPS can re-issue, since delayed waiting for GWA's new legal status and banking to be set up.
- Curator's UNOPS contract amended to cover direct costs of display system construction and panel production
- Intro to GWA & invitation to contribute sent to all LAC GEF projects and IAs
- GWA members briefed and encouraged to contact GEF projects to discuss gender issues & challenges & solicit materials for exhibit; LAC materials beginning to be submitted.
- Design & construction budget for display system finalized with curator; funds advanced by UNOPS to purchase materials.