



GLOBAL INTERNATIONAL WATERS ASSESSMENT

NEWSLETTER No 5 December 2003

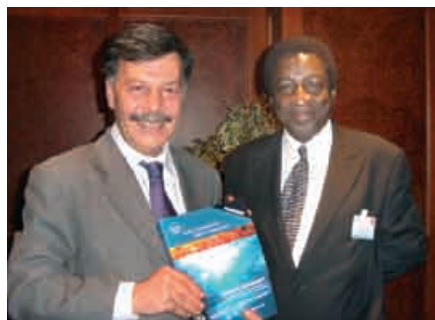
GIWA launches African reports

Freshwater shortage has the highest severity of impact on the water situation for people living in the Lake Chad Basin. The primary reason is climatic changes, aggravated by stream flow modification as dams are disrupting the timing and extent of the flooding of the Waza-Logone and Hadeija Nguru wetlands.

The GIWA Assessment in the Lake Chad Basin, region 43, ranked freshwater shortage the priority concern. Freshwater shortage is the driving force of many other concerns. It has caused social tensions from the migration of people from the drought stricken northern regions of the basin into areas surrounding the lake and associated river sub-systems.



Salif Diop from UNEP-DEWA and Mohammed Adamu Sani, Executive Secretary of the Lake Chad Basin Commission, were pleased with the GIWA launch.



The GIWA report was appreciated by UNEP's Deputy Executive Director Shafqat Kakakhel and PANAFCO Chair Halifa Drammeh.



GIWA Coordinator Edith Mussukuya presented a personal copy of the African edition on the GIWA regional reports to Ousman Diallo, expert from the Niger River Basin.

Lake Chad is one of four African water regions presented in new special editions of GIWA reports. These editions were launched at the Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on December 11. Four of the eight sub-Saharan regions have completed the assessment.

Region 42 the Gulf of Guinea, region 47 the East African Rift Valley Lakes and region 45b the Indian Ocean Islands were regions presented, all reporting that human impacts on natural systems and resources have increased.

Mr Shafqat Kakakhel, the Deputy Executive Director of UNEP said: "at the root of transboundary water problems are the prevailing trends in the development of demography, economy, poverty, technology, culture, knowledge, gov-

ernance and policies. The GIWA regional reports address these root causes in an illustrative manner that highlights incentives and policy options that can be deployed in order to reverse negative trends. They point to the need for a paradigm shift in the management of the aquatic environment, which would encompass the harmonisation of water policies with land, agriculture and forestry policies and development needs in order to improve water conservation and secure the sustainable use of the aquatic resources for the benefit of the present and future generations."



The Nigerian Minister of Water M. S. Shagari, who is also the AMCOW Chair, expressed his gratitude for the GIWA report, which was handed to him by Shafqat Kakakhel. Also present were the Ministers Sylvia Masebo, Zambia; Maria Mut-gamba, Uganda and Ronnie Kasrils, South Africa.



LME information

The GIWA Core Team has reached an agreement with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in order to use and include the Large Marine Ecosystems (LME) information into the GIWA project. Dr Kenneth Sherman from NOAA and Dr Sherry Heileman – who has been assigned to GIWA for this task – will provide a synthesis report mapping the four modules of the LME concept into the format of the five GIWA concerns.



Dr Sherry Heileman discussing the LME project with GIWA's Elina Rautalahti-Miettinen and Dag Daler

Troubled Waters; Bridging Science and Society

is the title of an international conference to be held in Kalmar, Sweden, August 22-25, 2004. This will be a post-meeting to the Stockholm Water Week and its focus is on methods for assessing environmental issues in international waters.

Regional reports from the GIWA assessment will be presented as well as experiences gained from HELP and VASTRA programs.

GIWA as a UNEP Module for water assessments

The GIWA Ambassador Gotthilf Hempel co-chaired a meeting on the development of the UNEP Module for coastal and marine environmental assessments, Nairobi 19-21, November 2003. The module shall provide coherence and continuity to UNEP's various assessment activities such as GIWA, Millennium Assessment and Global Environment Outlook (GEO). GIWA methodology – as presented by Juan Carlos Belau-steguigoitia – and the GIWA network of focal points, regional teams and core team were recognized as strong elements of the module and potentially of a Global Marine Assessment being initiated by UN General Assembly.

Officials visit GIWA

Several high level officials in Sweden have recently expressed interest in the GIWA work. The speaker of the Parliament, Mr. Björn von Südwow, visited the Core Team along with regional Parliament members and the County Governor, Mr. Sven Lindgren. The two ministers of education Ms. Lena Hallengren and Mr. Thomas Östros have also participated in GIWA activities.



The Minister of Education Ms Lena Hallengren discussed global water stress with Juan Carlos Belau-steguigoitia, GIWA coordinator...

...who also met the Minister of Education and Research Thomas Östros, as did Ulla Li Zweifel and Edith Mussukuya, both at GIWA.

Dear GIWA friends,

I want to thank Dag Daler for relinquishing this space to me so that I may make a few comments as the new Chair of the GIWA Steering Committee. There are three reasons why I feel GIWA is important. First, GIWA's aim is to use a standard methodology to assess global international waters. This allows us to compare success and failure stories across cases (or regions) and better inform policy makers. While each region is unique, we can often use experiences to assist other regions in their management efforts.

Second, GIWA is not only a set of reports, but an extensive network of scholars who have come together to work on international water issues. One of the key legacies of the assessment will be this network, which can be called upon for future assessment activities.

And third, capacity building is an important component of GIWA. And this capacity building works two ways; it allows researchers from regions that lack the analytical capacity to undertake environmental assessments to learn more about this type of analysis, and it allows researchers that have analytical capacity to better understand how local knowledge can be applied - very successfully in many cases - to developing management solutions to transboundary water problems.

GIWA also will make an important contribution by identifying basins that are most "at risk," meaning those basins that need more research and assistance in the future. This is one of the main issues for the GEF, the main contributor to GIWA funds.

Last, a major legacy of GIWA will be to examine cross-cutting and thematic issues

within the various regional studies that are the core of the assessment. I hope everyone will support me to not only assist the GIWA in finishing the initial regional studies but to also ensure that GIWA has the financial means to address these cross-cutting issues.

Steve Lonergan,
GIWA Steering Group Chairman



Steve Lonergan (center) meets with the steering group and GIWA hosts: Inesis Kiskis, Örn Taube, Dag Daler, Lars Malm-borg, Gotthilf Hempel and Pinya Sarasas

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