



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

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Pre-IWC3: 10am, Monday, 20 June 2005

Post-IWC3: 3pm, Saturday, 25 June, 2005

Pestana Bahia Hotel

Rua Fonte do Boi 216 Rio Vermelho

Salvador, Brazil

PRE-IWC3 MINUTES (Janot Mendler recording)

Present: Dann, Andy, Sean, Vlad, Andrea, Janot

Objectives

1. Accept minutes from fall SC meeting(s).
2. Review progress since last SC meeting¹, identifying lessons, next steps to address any challenges
3. Present IWL brochure; newsletter; exchange materials -- for communication and reference during IW Conference; present cumulative trainees list (per VM request)
4. Get all on target and on the same page and re: meta-messages for IWC
5. Final preview of IWC plans (w/GETF, last 20 min.), SC member & PCT roles (re: conference, IW:LEARN messages to projects this week, etc.)

Expected Outputs

1. Ratified minutes from fall 2004.
2. List of SC guidance/decisions to address any challenges/issues related to progress.
3. Agreement re:
 - IWC objectives,
 - meta-messages
 - roles & outreach by IWTF & PCT

Minutes

Question as to whether WB funds transfer resolved: we believe Vahid & Tracy sorted it out.

Action: ask Marea for details

1. Request from SC for IWL to revise minutes.

Decision: format for minutes will be to take agenda, make short summary discussion, and just report decisions & action items.

Comment [DMS1]: Janot: feel free to use the agenda structure below for brief minutes (key findings, important questions/issues raised, decisions made, etc.) – remember SC asked NOT to have comprehensive transcription, only important stuff. See my example below.

¹ See QPR, newsletter progress vis ProDoc milestones, contracting & hires handout, & e-fora summaries

Action: Sean has a simple format he can provide to IWL

Action: by mid-July Dann revise last mtg minutes and provide this mtg's minutes in SK format.

2. ProgRept

- Discussion on SEA-RLC about to do SEA TDA/SAP guidelines

Decision: needs to dovetail w/TSC TDA/SAP course

Action: Dann to get Richard Cooper draft of TDA/SAP course

- Discussion on sustainability of TSCTDA/SAP course; may want to leave it w/U Plymouth but Laurence has lots of fish to fry..only a few people who can deliver it now – Andy, Andrea, Laurence

Decision: need to develop delivery capacity

- St. Petersburg workshop successfully addressed public participation and info mgmt

Decision: consider merging Sean's IT workshops & ELI's regional PP workshops in regions

- Stakeholder Exchange program launched

Decision: SC will develop and vet a short list of priority exchanges

Decisions on criteria for exchanges: project staff are a priority, exchanges should plug into existing project activities

Action: make clear to projects not all proposals can be funded (although

TWINBASIN offers an alternative as well as potential for follow-up exchanges)

Action: by Oct 1, SC will prepare short list, and will vet all proposals submitted

Action: develop a meta-schedule of all project activities.

- Discussion on linking projects to IW-IMS, how activity outcomes to be documented in IW-IMS, how targeted search functions.

Decision: new projects priority for linking; old projects can also use tool-kit to revamp/upgrade.

Action: 16 projects to be connected by end of year (however not a prob if we miss deadline, will easily make up for it in next yr.)

- Discussion about July IT workshop objectives, and how SC can help.

Decision: open to 5-10 projects (perhaps PEMSEA – big site; GCLME – new site; Globallast – interesting site; SEA-RLC – ToT?), 4-10 days; funded by UNEP, takehome is re-done website on CD.

- Discussion on ANBO contract negotiations: bogged down, insufficient admin capacity, exploring options w/GWP

Decision: talk to NEPAD people at IWC: Vlad to introduce Janot

- Decision: express gratitude to Mish from SC!

- Discussion on UNEP's plans not to hire TCC, how to spend \$\$ saved

Decision: 2 consultants will be hired on 1 yr contracts

Decision: 'Best Practices' scratched from project turn out to be project survey priority: back in! Training: back in!

- Dann reports ELI has raised 1:1 cofinance

3. IWC packet review (Jennifer Jones joins mtg)

- Action: SC wants to know how much \$\$ from Coke?
- Decision: add paying sponsors to speech acknowledgements.

4. review of pre-conf mtg sched:

- Workshops, PALs w/M&E, SC, chairs & presenters

Decision: brief coord mtg every evening for next day

POST-IWC3 MINUTES (Dann Sklarew recording)

Objectives

1. Identify initial lessons from IWC3
2. Refine and coordinate remaining 2005 work plan, accounting for this learning
3. Approve budget revisions and travel plans
4. Address any additional PCT needs from SC (e.g., IWC4 site, IWRM self-assessment)

Expected Outputs

1. Documentation of lessons learned from IWC3
(re: IWC conference process, portfolio learning needs/resources, etc.).
2. Refined 2005 Work Plan
3. SC-approved UNOPS-IW:LEARN Budget Revision and Travel Plans
4. Documentation of next steps (in minutes)

Post-IWC3 Minutes

1. Lessons from IWC3 (Insights from pre-meeting luncheon w/PALs in Attachment A)
 - Peer-to-peer interactions in small groups is vital element of IWCs and should be given more time and attention in next IWC, in order to effectively meet participants' learning and inter-project networking needs
 - Agenda was over-scheduled
 - Politicization of agenda limited relevance and value to primary target audience; we literally lost people (>30%) in plenary sessions as the week progressed
 - Quality and duration of presentations was highly variable; precise guidance or "5-slide" template may be needed to keep presenters brief, poignant and on message
 - Workshops were generally on-target in outreach and affirmation of projects' needs for TDA/SAP, P2 and, to a certain extent, ICT training
 - GETF did an admirable job under challenging circumstances
 - Handicap access to venue location (with only elevator being out-of-order) was deplorable
 - GETF's preliminary review (91 evaluations / 28 learning assessments):
 - Having the event over 2 weekends, we lost people.
 - Need more interaction between participants.
 - Chairs need to play [pro]active role in time management for all presentations and plenary sessions, in particular
 - "This conference was all about replenishment;" an approach not to repeat next time.
 - Consider having every project submit lessons learned & best practices in advance of next conference – every participant – as a precondition for attending; best examples circulated via "experience notes," summarized/ marketed via *IW Bridges* newsletter, posted to IWRC, and focus for [on-line &/or face-to-face] discussions.
 - Use exhibits better, provide exhibits more time – 2-3 hours over course of conference.
 - LAC Day lost folks – consider ½ day for regional experiences in Africa and/or integrate African cases into each plenary (align [Africa] helping Africa as overall GEF strategic priority into IWC)

DECISION: Continue to solicit evaluations and assess learning needs via email among SC, PALs and participants. PCU report back to SC upon review of such materials (ETA: before 4th Q 2005)

2. Refinements to 2005 Workplan

A Info Sharing

- New IWRC will be on-line “within another month” and certainly before 2005 4th Q Council Meeting (also in time to present at next IW:LEARN SC meeting earlier that week).
- Suggestion to add tools for project management

B Learning

- B1.1: Caribbean x-focal area stuff is sensitive: PCU should keep in close communication with IWTF/SC to navigate accordingly
- B1.2: Potential to connect IWRC to UNECA’s AWICH &/or **ADIRIM_S**

Comment [DMS2]: Sean: What does this stand for?

C IW Conferences

- C1: Need to assess this conference, digest, and then prepare to assess and select conference coordination team by early 2006.
- C2: Need to resolve host country this summer, “almost there” for S.A.

D Innovation

- D1: SEA-RLC developing GIS tools for SCS and BoBLME projects, and oceanography DL course.
- D3: IWRM Roundtables funding may need to be re-directed into IWC4 or other activities; JRM [in absentia] suggests applying it to have projects do IWRM self-assessments.

E Outreach/Partnerships

- E2: Plan to premiere LME video at Global Oceans Forum in Jan. 2006.

3a. Budget & Spending Issues (see attached graphs)

- Pace of UNEP spending is dramatically under-budget, key personnel (TCC) not yet hired (0% spent on personnel)
- UNDP spending reflected materially 60% significant cost-overrun (\$80k) in IWC3 conference coordination; PCU proposes re-allocation from activity D3 (IWRM Roundtables) once final shortfall is determined in 2005 Q3; will report back to SC by next meeting... SC proposed that new IWC MSP could cover shortfall; consider relative cost of GETF vs. local conference coordinator(s)

3b. Travel

- Travel plans as presented by PCU acceptable to SC
- Need to assess whether budget and agenda merits UNDP-PCU attending Lakes Conference in Nairobi [undiscussed alternative: SK attend as IW:LEARN rep, or DMS meet SK there to refine new IWRC, cost shared across UNDP/UNEP travel budgets.]

4. Next Steps – Beyond those above, none identified

PALs Post-Conference Insights on IWC3
DRAFT based on June 25, 2005 Luncheon

1. What worked?

- Smaller sessions work better
- Focus on discussions (over presentations) [though note marine session 3 counter-example]
- Flip chats
- Presentations near end of one workshop session, allowed for group development first (though schedule tight)

2. What didn't?

- GEF replenishment drove the agenda (top-down)
- Many PowerPoint presentations were poorly constructed, wordy, off topic and too long
- Language issues are always a problem
- Age, geographic and gender bias was very apparent
- Level of participation by women (both as presenters and discussants) was poor
- There was an imbalance towards IAs (implementing agencies)
- Imposing PowerPoint presentations on limited-duration breakout *discussions* restrained those sessions' flexibility and depth of dialog
- People did not come prepared to learn
- People in Internet Cafe or ready paper during sessions
- Time limits on speakers were not enforced.
- Agenda was over-scheduled both within and among sessions
- Plenaries had too much introduction, too little substance
- Handicap access was a big problem -- broken elevator made carrying up/down stairs mandatory; hearing-impaired participants were only provided assisted hearing devices during simultaneously translated presentations

3. What could be improved for IWC4 (Activity C4)? (And how?)

- Need to involve more project- and regional-level NGOs
- Use of real case studies and examples of experiences/challenges overcome, rather than projects overviews, per se
- Capture insights and examples from projects rather than a broad overview; people need stories
- May need to separate people next time into technical- versus policy/management- types
- People need to be open-minded & psyched to learn, be oriented and come prepared to learn; psychologically speaking, "learning mode" is different than "conference mode"

- Consider alternatives to free form PowerPoint presentations, e.g., 5-slide templates, which provide structure without losing benefits to those who speak English as foreign language
- Need to have more cross-cutting themes like P2 next time
- Need more networking opportunities and brainstorming sessions.
- We want people to talk with one another
- Need to actively work to balance gender involvement, strongly encourage more balanced gender involvement -- how?
- Moderators/chairs/facilitators MUST use time cue cards to warn then cut off long-winded speakers.
- Focus on "part conference, part workshop/learning," balance networking with learning
- Participants need opportunity to introduce themselves/projects before they are comfortable sharing experiences
- Presenters need a specific topic/issue to focus their presentations on something besides project in general
- Consider dicing participants into various sub-groups throughout the conference, e.g., by issues in workshops (e.g., economic valuation), by regions, by basin-types (river, aquifer, etc.)
- Convey where M&E, reporting is going (its purpose)

4. What did we learn, to inform other aspects of IW:LEARN?

- Activity A1: Projects do not know enough about other projects (even in their own region) --> need for awareness of and access to project profiles and contact information (on www.iwlearn.net)
- Activity A1: Need to organize and present project profiles by basin and waterbody type (e.g., 6 groundwater projects...)
- Activity A1: IWC proceedings, presentations, participants, and speaker bios should be included on IWRC and CD-ROM
- Activity A1/E2: Need to advertise availability of IWRC materials, upcoming learning opportunities (e.g., economic valuation) to GEF IW projects and partners
- Activity B2/C2: Exchanges of experience needs focus.
- Activity B2: There is a resources vs. opportunity gap: need [institutional] willingness and *resources* to maintain ongoing dialog
- Activity B2.1.1 Need to reconcile lake@iwlearn.net with LBMI e-forum
- Activity B4: GEF IW projects' implementation should include NGOs -- need to help promote NGO participation in and ownership of projects; need instrument to bring stakeholders together (e.g., collaborating on TDA)
- Activity C2: Talking and networking are ok (even beyond "learning" proper)
- ALL: Actively promote gender and geographic balance in presentations, cases and participants
- ALL: Create and follow handicap access checklist for all events and activities

