

Minutes IW:LEARN Steering Committee

May 17, 2004, Washington, D.C.

Participants:

IW:LEARN Steering Committee: Vladimir Mamaev (UNEP); Andy Hudson (UNDP); Marea Hatzioleas (World Bank); Al Duda, Andrea Merla, Sara Gräslund (GEFSec);

IW:LEARN Personnel and Partners: Dann Sklarew, Janot Mendler (IW:LEARN PCU); Andrew Hooten, Francis Staub (AJH Environmental Services); Alice Aureli, Alberto Tejada-Guibert, Bo Appelgren (UNESCO IHP); Monica Ellis (GETF), part of meeting.

The IW:LEARN Steering Committee met the whole day May 17, 2004. Vladimir chaired the meeting and Sara was rapporteur. The agenda, which had been circulated in advance, was adopted as presented (with only Agenda Item 3 below moved up in order from original agenda).

General Recommendations and Guidance for IW:LEARN (*italics indicate SC consensus point*)

- “How does it benefit GEF IW projects?” All IW:LEARN activities should be vetted by this question. [VM]
- *It should be the responsibility of IW:LEARN’s partnership activity leaders (“PALs”) to ensure that all learning output from their activities are documented, archived and disseminated through the IWRC/IW-IMS to benefit current and future IW projects. (Component A will provide the infrastructure for such contributions, but not the contributions themselves.) [PCU will make sure that all PAL TORs reflect this requirement.]*
- Create a roster of all those trained through IW:LEARN workshops and programs (name, affiliation, GEF/semi-GEF/non-GEF, Country). [VM]
- Add \$200,000 to the budget to support an Administrative Assistant familiar with UN accounting procedures. [AH]
- A2: IW-IMS needs to capture and IW:LEARN to disseminate info on ICT tools various GEF projects have developed. These should be freely available (for download) to the GEF family.
- B3: Extend inter-project exchange cycle over 12 months, allowing for both small (1-2 person) and, with cost-sharing, larger (4-6 person) exchange tours. [DS]
- B4: SC members (IATF)

General Recommendations and Guidance for IW IATF

- Create a mandate that electronic copies of all GEF IW projects’ information products must be captured, categorized and available via the IWRC.
- Require that all future GEF IW projects include 1% for IW:LEARN information sharing and structured learning activities (including inter-project exchanges); this is modest and vital to sustaining IW:LEARN benefits beyond the 4-year Operational Phase.
- B3: Provide IW:LEARN with guidance regarding focus/themes for 2004-2005 inter-project exchange program.

- D3: Provide IW:LEARN guidance regarding development of this activity, subsequent to inputs from Norway and FAO.
- Use IW:LEARN as STAP reviewer for ICT tools considered in project proposals. [VM]
- Members should secure additional [IATF mandate and] corporate budget from agencies for IATF to focus on IW:LEARN.
- Vis data collection management, need to have projects
 - Establish a baseline monitoring situation then track it over time.
 - Display indicators and progress in images and maps, e.g., using GIS in their TDAs (UNEP “has this capability.” Need methods for integrating UNEP basemap data with projects’ own monitoring and assessment data)
 - Establish whose role it is to collect and integrate projects data and create maps for GEF assessments status indicators and progress (e.g., vs. GIWA areas of concern).

Minutes by Agenda Item

Agenda item 1: Presentation of final products from the pilot phase

- a) Stakeholder exchange pilot, e.g. between the Danube and Mediterranean projects, Rio San Juan and Rio de la Plata, etc.: These exchanges were determined to be effective tools for replication. One lesson learned was that longer time than predicted was needed for the application, implementation and follow-up of the exchanges. Exchanges involving several people from each project was discussed, and since it would increase the costs it was suggested that the projects would need to contribute some additional funding for this. It was emphasized that all experiences are captured in the IW Resource Center to benefit the IW portfolio.
- b) KM for water management workshop, presented by Janot: A 3-phase virtual and face-to-face workshop was held in conjunction with the 6th Water Information summit in Delft last September. Among over 50 participants bringing their experience to the workshop, 5 GEF projects were represented, and others indirectly through NGOs or governments. They each developed and implemented 10-week KM plans during and after the training. The revision of websites came up in discussion and it was emphasized that information must not be lost in the course of updating. Dann suggests that the IWTF make sure that there is an archive function in each project that would capture information in the GEF IW-IMS (Information Management System). Vladimir stressed the need to also maintain a database with rosters of all people trained in GEF-supported activities.
- c) Red Sea ICZM distance learning course, presented by Andrew Hooten: the CD provides fundamental information about ICZM in 9 modules. While formed for the Red Sea region, it can be adapted to other regions. The CD is a useful tool since Internet connection alone is often inadequate. Given copyright concerns, developing such a product is a much larger undertaking than anticipated. The CD is so far in English, but may be translated into local languages. The course will be piloted in the region, possibly at an inter-basin conference in Egypt next year.

Several Red Sea organizations have expressed interest in replicating and/or sustaining this service to the region.

- d) ICT tools co-developed with GEF IW projects, presented by Dann. The D-LIST: a regional web based system is actively serving coastal managers in the Benguela region. The web based Rio San Juan (PROCUENCA) Institutional Mapping Tool will be demonstrated at the end of May in the countries. A Causal Chain indicators tool co-developed with University of Plymouth, with inputs from the Dniepr River project (DNIPRO), may eventually be integrated with the GEF's TDA/SAP course developed by TRAIN-SEA-COAST. An open source GIS map server deployed by IW:LEARN is available to provide cost effective dissemination of spatial information by projects and partners, as well as for training purposes. Development of new tools has been removed from the ProDoc since the last SC meeting. It was stressed that the tools that are developed by IW:LEARN and various projects should nonetheless be transferred to other projects with IW:LEARN assistance (where applicable and affordable). There are already several good GIS server tools developed, e.g. for the Black Sea and Caspian, that could be used in other projects as well. Information about the persons involved in software development must be kept. Vladimir suggested that all new projects' plans to develop ICT tools should be reviewed by IW:LEARN in order to avoid duplication and keep track of ongoing tool developments. Al said that GIS can be powerful to understand the complexity of IW systems, and that there should be possibilities to record baselines and track changes over time since this also makes it useful as an M&E tool to monitor indicators. GIS should be further utilised in TDA processes, which IW:LEARN may help support as appropriate during the FSP. Transaction costs of transferring ICT between projects can be high. Thus, IW:LEARN needs resources and personnel capable of helping transfer/translate applications (ICT tools) between projects, along with an outreach strategy to show and demonstrate all such products.

Agenda item 2: Full-sized project overview

Dann hopes the project will be ready for CEO endorsement July 1. Co-finance of over 5.75 million USD is already confirmed. It was agreed that further co-finance confirmation will be requested from major partnership activity leads (e.g., UNESCO-IHP, LakeNet, World Fish Center, the Greek and German governments and GWP-Med) prior to CEO signature. The status of negotiations with any as-yet-to-be finalized secondary co-financiers, such as IOC, OAS, GWP, etc. should be summarized in the appropriate Executive Summary table but needn't be resolved prior to CEO signature.

- a) Budget.
- Budget should disaggregate participant travel from sub-contracts.
 - An additional \$200,000 should be requested to add admin assistant for the project.
- b) The ToRs need to be revised (then reviewed by SC):
- Consolidate all ToRs in one place in the ProDoc.
 - Clarify deliverables as well as organizational and reporting structure (i.e., who delivers what and who reports to whom); the relationships between the different partners be clarified (e.g. who should be contacted in case of

problems) and that specific activities under oversight of CTA and DD be listed.

- [Andy and Vladimir request that] ToRs should be standardized (e.g. to include qualifications), including roles and clear responsibilities for all activities
- Justify comparative advantage for pre-selected entities
- PCU TOR should emphasize –
 - i. overall project implementation (not micromanagement)
 - ii. specific substantive vs. oversight roles
 - iii. cross-component coordination
 - iv. building sustainability of benefits
- Vladimir asked that CTA TOR specify responsibility for cross-component coordination; to ensure that all activities are captured in the IW-IMS.
- Include in every Partnership Activity Lead (PAL) ToR need to deliver information products to IW-IMS.
- [Vladimir says that] UNEP staff cannot report to the CTA but to UNEP. Dann raised the difficulty with a project staff person paid by the project but not reporting to the CTA. [Andy clarified that] UNEP's TCC will coordinate UNEPs work with the CTA, and besides reporting to UNEP also report to the SC.
- [Andy requested to] Make a distinction between personnel and sub-contracts.
- [Andy said that the] Stakeholder Exchange Coordinator is not a subcontract but a personnel hire.
- [Andy stressed that the suggested (but not budgeted)] Program assistant is required for the implementation of the project. He suggested that the sum recommended that the final ProDoc should be increased by \$200,000 USD to cover this. Add ToRs for Steering Committee (SC, in-kind), PCU (WBI, in-kind) Learning Coordinator, (UNEP) Technical Component Coordinator, Admin/Program Assistant (accounting, exchange support, metadata entry), and (GETF) IW Conference Coordinator.
- IBRD-WBI should be added to the list of Sub-contracts and Inter-Agency Agreements. (Though no funds are currently scheduled to be transferred to WBI, it will be providing funds to the project.)

(c) Current PDF-B delivery schedule:

- 5/31 draft w/revised TORs, organogram, co-finace letters to date.
- 6/7 Final draft
- 6/15 Cover note ready for GEF
- 6/30 CEO signature
- 7/1 Contracts in place for [key] personnel

(d) Vladimir remarked that we need more time than that.

Al said that the IA reps' increased participation in the SC should be reflected in their corporate budgets.

Agenda item 3: UNDP guided activities.

a) B3: Interproject exchanges.

- Regarding a few big exchanges or several more small ones each year? AI would like to see some targeted exchanges with multiple participants to increase the impact and suggested that while exemplary projects (such as South China Sea, LTBP) should be rewarded with participation in exchanges, perhaps some of the weak projects should also be targeted to assist them. He also suggested that funds should be programmed for team exchanges, for example with European lakes.
- The SC agreed IW:LEARN should keep doors open to leverage potential partners' co-finance for twinning exchanges, thereby increasing the activity's scale. Suitable projects to participate in exchanges should be identified early.
- *Regarding potential focuses for 2004-5 exchange program (AI: will be further discussed in the IWTF on May 18.)*
- [Janot said that the] PCU outreach to all projects in the portfolio addresses the identification of exchange opportunities but that the IAs and SC should provide suggestions for twinings as well.
- [In response to Vladimir's concerns that twinning exchanges' outputs are not a one-off, Janot says that it is accounted for in the logframe matrix as] an output/verification that exchanges should (and all project activities) be captured in the Information Management System.
- It was discussed whether a more senior exchange coordinator (as in the pilot phase) could work more cost-effectively in cooperation with an in-house program assistant. Dann emphasized that the ToRs for the exchanges should be developed by someone who knows the projects very well, e.g., IW:LEARN personnel facilitating w/the IAs and the projects themselves. Thus, he proposes internalizing the exchange coordinator position (from consultant to spread) across PCU personnel (i.e., Deputy Director w/Program Assistant to support).
- *The SC had no objections to the overall ToRs of the activity B3, and felt that exchange coordination should be internal (not outsourced), supported by a combination of senior staff and program assistant.*

b) B4: public participation training.

- Re: ELI as Partnership Activity Lead (PAL) for this activity - In discussion of the comparative advantages of collaboration with ELI, Andy asked 'are they too legal?' Dann asserted that prior collaboration with them has been good, they have track record regarding building public participation capacity in IW, they organize workshops effectively, and will provide 300 000 USD in cofinancing. Language will be added to the ProDoc on ELI's comparative advantage as the preferred lead partner (PAL) for this activity.
- It is agreed that the focus of the activity is public involvement and not legal matters; the workshops will address adaptive management based on TDA/SAP approach. The publication written by AI and Juha on public

participation should be taken into account. IW:LEARN will collaborate with the GEFSec in this activity.

- Janot requested input from the IW IATF on which projects should be involved to contribute public participation examples. Al mentioned the Plata Basin Env't. Forum, South China Sea's inter-ministerial and science for a, Vladimir-mentioned Black Sea NGO Forum. Al said there may be good experience that could also be drawn from other focal areas (Shona Cruz, formerly w/GEFsec, should be contacted for recommendations and contacts; now at WB). *The IW IATF members should in 10 days give examples from their portfolios.*
- Key issue: How to get many countries of people participating at various scales? (e.g., NGO network participating across 15 countries in Danube).
- PCU will make sure this is addressed through design and implementation with its executing partners.

c) D3 (CSD/IWRM roundtables):

- Al described the ongoing work in the GEF Secretariat for increased integration in order to improve possibilities to attain the WSSD targets, and says that the IWTF should be responsible for this activity and will provide guidance once we hear back from Norway and FAO regarding the high-level roundtable suggestion raised at CSD-12. However, it is not clear what the outcome of that process will be. Al said the IAs should work together with IW:LEARN and Cap-Net to develop the (IWRM roundtable) activity.
- Dann notes it is difficult to plan activities when we don't know what the outcome will be. Andrea met with convention Secretariats at CSD-12 and suggests GEF could lead follow-up to this.
- Vladimir asked how this relates to IW:LEARN's objectives and why it should be included in the project.
- Al stressed GEF CEO's interest in high-level coordination dialogue and endorsed Janot's suggestion that the convention secretariats be invited to Rio to discuss integration, and that this could strengthen invitation to Lula.
- Possibility mentioned to also explore interest on behalf of Brazil, as host and country with many GEF projects, to announce/commit to work with agencies to effect integration as an outcome of a parallel high-level integration mtg. in conjunction w/the Rio conf.
- *Janot will work with Al on this, with guidance from the IWTF.*

If not to be scheduled with IWC3, IW:LEARN may want to approach UNESCO-IHP and IHE-Delft and possibly FAO regarding an IWRM meeting.

Agenda item 4: UNEP-guided activities.

a) Inclusion of other focal areas:

- It was agreed *IW:LEARN should focus on the IW portfolio and capture of all FSP activities in the IW-IMS, while the Caribbean-GEF activity offers an opportunity to promote integration and enlargement across focal areas.*

b) Overall Component A (IW-IMS)

- Janot says that projects will be encouraged and assisted to format their websites so that the information can be intercompatible with and feed into the IW-IMS. Quality assurance of data was discussed, and it is agreed that if quality cannot be assured, the data should not go into the system. Quality assurance is best handled at the entry point; e.g. projects are responsible for the quality of data on their sites
- Data sharing was also discussed, and the problem mentioned of countries not necessarily amenable to sharing data. Examples were mentioned from GEF IW projects and UNESCO's Water Portal for the Americas.
- It is understood that *information developed by GEF projects is in the public domain but only that additional information which countries care to share can be shared via the GEF IW-IMS.*
- Vladimir says that links to partners' info systems will be created. Janot and Dann want inter-linkages developed with Cap-Net, LakeNet, ISARM, IWRN, and other structured learning partners.
- Dann requests clarification on whether IW:LEARN should help the projects or the countries that are conducting the projects, and it is agreed that *IWLEARN helps the countries by helping the projects.*

c) A1.

- Newsletter A1 suggests that a regular GEF-IW newsletter or syndicated "What's new" bulletin be produced with news from all projects e.g. every two months. Vladimir says 'this will be done.' (*Budget line ambiguous.*)
- GEF IW-IMS should 1) interlink with existing and new GEF IW project web sites, 2) capture old project info (provide institutional memory when sites are updated so old GEF-generated info is not lost and can be accessed), 3) link with IA, GEF IW project and IW:LEARN structured learning partners' relevant resources (e.g. UNDP Cap-Net, UNEP-GEO, UNESCO freshwater & Global Marine Assessment, etc.).
- Quality assurance should be at entry point; e.g. projects/partners need to quality assure their own sites' info and this will serve as QA for info that feeds into IW-IMS.

d) Dann requests that UNEP write the ToRs for the UNEP staff that will work with IW:LEARN.

- He also asks that UNEP provide a technical person rather than a high-level generalist, since the high level oversight and support preferably should be conducted by the PCU.
- Vladimir says that there will be one technical person supported fully by UNEP, and one person supported at least 50% by UNEP.
- Dann suggests that the staff paid by UNEP should be presented to the project as co-financing. Regarding the staff not paid by UNEP, he suggests that the resources may be better used by strengthening the PCU. He also notes that the project budget does not cover a high-level person.

- Vladimir said the CTA *should be responsible for ensuring Component A linkage to and coordination with all other activities*;
 - UNEP will lead but can work with CTA and Deputy Director as needed to implement non-ICT activities. In conclusion, Vladimir says that *UNEP will provide ToR for the TCC, and that UNEP will also provide a Letter of Commitment confirming the cofinancing*.
 - A1.1 IW-IMS Design Workshop: may be organized for December; partners to also include UNESCO, IGRAC, IOC, IWRN, AWICH, etc.
 - A1.2. There's a need for ToR from WB or UNEP for how it will be done. Marea notes that a number of best practices as well as a lot of other information will be shared by each project. Information about format needs to be available. Dann and Janot say that there will be an IW-IMS design workshop involving key partners, possibly in December. If it is not possible to develop all the modules with the current budget, Marea suggested that four be prioritized and that the project wait to add two more until it is clear how much cofinancing there will be. Dann and Vladimir discussed UNEP's budget: with \$100k to do four modules, UNEP could provide 15k to 4 partners and will do work within UNEP for \$40k. AI asserts that there will have to be at least 6 modules; e.g. Aquifer/Groundwater, River Basins, Lakes, LMEs, Coral Reefs, and Africa (note: there will also be linkages to structured learning regions via SEA-RLC, IWRN, etc.); this means an average of \$10k rather than \$15k per module to work with 6 partners. Janot notes that some modules will require less development work than others.
- e) A2.1 ICT workshops: potential for GIS training was discussed; possible adaptation of Caspian GIS was suggested by Vladimir.
- f) B1.1 Caribbean GEF Cross-focal area coordination: AI explains that this activity is the result of the inter-linkages discussion in the STAP.
- If UNEP will cover additional cost of one person to staff component A activities, GEF can allocate the additional \$200k to fund this Caribbean cross-focal activity. (Cost of the person at UNEP cannot be paid by the GEF).
 - Andrea further explains that this would be the first time that all GEF interventions in one geographic area would be analyzed, and that it is a test to see whether there are overlaps, gaps, cooperation opportunities that could be spurred and whether the GEF could work across focal areas in this region.
 - It could increase interest in the GEF for further cross-focal coordination.
 - Marea suggests that *the activity could be started by bringing the IAs regional people together to discuss the different themes and how they want to start the process*. Others agree.
 - Janot says that there is a good possibility for action now in this region to build on a sequence of intra-regional water resource management partnership meetings. One of the top priority recommendations agreed by govt representatives of 25 Wider Caribbean states was a request for efforts to improve donor coordination.

Agenda item 5, WB guided Structured Learning activities.

a) B1

B1.2 Africa IW Network:

- Marea described the WB GEF IW activities in Africa, and says that river basins would be the centerpiece, possibly also fisheries.
- Vladimir suggests that the EU should be involved.
- Marea wants the PCU to be engaged.
- The WB will focus on B1.2 and B2.3 Coral Reef exchange.
- *No objections were raised to launching the Africa network in year 3 to coincide with the Capetown IWC (2006-2007).*
- Vladimir says that UNEP should be involved in the Africa component, and that UNEP will provide information for the ProDoc regarding this component including relevant networks and in-kind contribution (e.g. Freshwater network UNEP is co-sponsoring w/Sweden; UNEP/UNESCO Africa Network on Water for Cities; UNEP/UNESCO/Habitat Urban Groundwater Quality, AMCOW & NEPAD linkages).

B1.3 (Europe)

- Dann says that there will be a bonus transboundary water management workshop (for free) held in Stockholm the the European projects should sign up for within the next few weeks.
- It is agreed that the European component would fit well into year 1, the Caribbean into year 2, African into year 3, and SEA into year 4.

b) B2. Ecosystem-related subsets of portfolio

- Marea says that structured learning will be organized with virtual and face-to-face exchanges.
- The aquifer theme was discussed, and Andrea and Al emphasize the importance of it to foster groundwater activities in the GEF IW portfolio.
- Considering UNESCO IHP's extensive experience in work with groundwater resources, it is hoped that they could help with this component.
- Alice says that they are willing to support, provide input and cooperate with IW:LEARN. They will look at the revised ProDoc with new budget (\$100k in B structured learning and \$10k for A aquifer/groundwater module).
- They are prepared to help organize groundwater activities in Rio.
- Andrea says that there should be a possibility for projects from other themes to learn from groundwater people during the conference.
- Alberto stresses the two big challenges regarding groundwater: people don't know much about it, and don't think it is connected to surface water systems.
- Dann says that *this theme is the only one where IW:LEARN has a cross-agency and cross-component (service-area) package, and that similar arrangements are desired for the other themes.*

- Regarding Rio, Marea further proposes that reef projects and LME projects that have reefs should be intertwined during the meeting.
- d) D2. Southeastern European IWRM.
- Marea explains that the Mediterranean partnership is developing, that there is a dialogue with the WBI, and that there will be a series of roundtable discussions. She also says that the WB will not provide any staffing for the D2 activity, but that WB staff will participate in it.
 - Alice suggests that UNESCO could constructively participate in the Athens/Petersberg roundtables;
 - Janot noted that the GWP-Med partners have been invited by UNESCO to the Thessaloniki meeting this October to explore potential for collaboration in groundwater aquifer activities in the region.
 - According to Dann, the proposed Mediterranean aquifer (Internet-mediated) pilot does not have any funding in the ProDoc at the moment, and this will be further discussed with UNESCO.
 - Alice informed the meeting about UNESCO activities in groundwater in the Balkans, Hungary and Poland, and that a tool kit for decisionmakers and conflict resolution tools are already developed.

Agenda item 6, Component E.

- a) E1: Strategic Plan for sustaining benefits of IW:LEARN.
- Andy suggests that *all IW projects be required to provide 1% of their budget to IW:LEARN to sustain it.*
 - Dann says that *the project could provide a suggestion for the fall SC meeting about how this idea could be realized.*
 - Outreach, stakeholder involvement and further financing from partners will also be parts of this activity.
- b) E2: Outreach through Side Events and Learning Products.
- Regarding outreach, AI suggests that IW:LEARN should participate in GEF activities on COPs, CSD, Global Water Partnership, World Water Forum, IUCN meetings etc, e.g. with IW:LEARN person + IA person + project persons.
 - “No more ‘nobody knows GEF’!”
 - Alice suggested that GEF identify its “champions” and send those projects to present at international meetings.
 - Regarding videos: several *project videos* exist and will be collected by the PCU. It is suggested that these *be put together to show what IW projects are doing* (it was agreed that they be collected under component E, and made available (possibly put together into a CD) under UNEP’s component A).
 - Additionally, a new LME video is being created to launch a series by Francois Odendaal Productions. Janot suggested this and other videos collected could be shown for a *‘film night’ at the IWCs*. Alice says that outreach should also target the scientific community.
 - One step would be to invite GEF or IA staff to the IHP Council in September.

- Al suggests that the ProDoc should be rephrased to specify that the *outreach activities will also work with the scientific community*. Marea notes that WB IW projects very often are represented at scientific conferences.

Agenda item 7, InterAgency coordination.

It is agreed that there is a need for interagency coordination. The SC is thankful to the participants from UNESCO for bringing fresh ideas to the meeting.

Regarding the final ProDoc, Andy thinks it can be ready by the middle of June, though Vladimir thinks it will not be ready until mid July. However, everybody agrees that all ToRs, cofinance confirmation etc. should be prepared as soon as possible.

Agenda item 8, Next meeting

November 15, same place and time as today is suggested. **(However in the IWTF May 18, it was suggested to move SC mtg. to November 30th).**

Minutes compiled with thanks to Sara Gräslund, annotated by Janot Mandler and Dann Sklarew for Steering Committee Review.