

# FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT AND CALL FOR PAPERS

**International Conference**

**on**

**Integrated Water Resources Management  
(IWRM): Lessons from Implementation in  
Developing Countries**

**and the**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Africa Regional meeting of the National  
Committees of UNESCO's International  
Hydrological Programme**

**Organised by the  
WATER RESEARCH COMMISSION of SOUTH AFRICA  
DEPARTMENT OF WATER AFFAIRS AND FORESTRY – UNESCO IHP  
Focal Point (South Africa)  
WATER INSTITUTE OF SOUTHERN AFRICA**

**10-12 March 2008  
Cape Town International Convention Centre  
SOUTH AFRICA**



## BACKGROUND

The time is suitable now for a reflection on how implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) is progressing around the world. Do the same Dublin IWRM founding principles still hold true? Should there be a variant set of principles for specific situations? The Global Water Partnership (GWP) has invested large resources in documenting different experiences and in keeping the concept alive.

It is realised that IWRM is a broad and encompassing concept. The conference aims at targeting a specific angle to IWRM, which are universal and important for developing countries. These are the impacts on society, the environment, the economy and health. The aim will be to compose assessments of local practices and experiences based on the founding principles as formulated in Dublin 1992. The IWRM science has evolved and numerous local practices have moulded and adapted these principles to local conditions and circumstances.

On the occasion of the 10 year anniversary into the implementation of the South African Water Law, the Water Research Commission of South Africa in partnership with the UNESCO International Hydrological Programme (IHP) focal point, the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry and the Water Institute of Southern Africa are organising a three day conference aimed at sharing experiences and lessons on IWRM from developing countries. The intention of the conference is to create a platform for practitioners and policy makers in the developing world to share their experiences in the implementation of IWRM.

The conference is not exclusive to developing countries but is an opportunity for dialogue between developing countries' experiences and the developed world as well as the donor society on the latest lessons and implementation experiences that can shape new concepts or adapting existing ones.

### THE DUBLIN PRINCIPLES of 1992

#### **Principle No. 1 - Fresh water is a finite and vulnerable resource, essential to sustain life, development and the environment**

Since water sustains life, effective management of water resources demands a holistic approach, linking social and economic development with protection of natural ecosystems. Effective management links land and water uses across the whole of a catchment area or groundwater aquifer.

#### **Principle No. 2 - Water development and management should be based on a participatory approach, involving users, planners and policy-makers at all levels**

The participatory approach involves raising awareness of the importance of water among policy-makers and the general public. It means that decisions are taken at the lowest appropriate level, with full public consultation and involvement of users in the planning and implementation of water projects.

#### **Principle No. 3 - Women play a central part in the provision, management and safeguarding of water**

This pivotal role of women as providers and users of water and guardians of the living environment has seldom been reflected in institutional arrangements for the development and management of water resources. Acceptance and implementation of this principle requires positive policies to address women's specific needs and to equip and empower women to participate at all levels in water resources programmes, including decision-making and implementation, in ways defined by them.

#### **Principle No. 4 - Water has an economic value in all its competing uses and should be recognized as an economic good**

Within this principle, it is vital to recognize first the basic right of all human beings to have access to clean water and sanitation at an affordable price. Past failure to recognize the economic value of water has led to wasteful and environmentally damaging uses of the resource. Managing water as an economic good is an important way of achieving efficient and equitable use, and of encouraging conservation and protection of water resources.

## PARTICIPANTS

Participants will include active practitioners in water resources management from policy makers, to implementers, government, private sector, civil society, academics, researchers, students, etc.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE

- ✓ To canvass the understanding of what IWRM actually means amongst participating countries;
- ✓ To collect information on the level of preparedness in developing countries for the implementation of IWRM such as a development of formal legal instruments on IWRM, financial allocations, training, capacity building and the required infrastructure for regional IWRM implementation;
- ✓ To establish an understanding of the challenges facing the implementation of IWRM in developing countries; and
- ✓ To assess progress with the implementation of IWRM, with special focus on developing countries and to identify major remaining challenges.

## THEMES

The symposium will be based on oral paper presentations as well as poster presentations on any of the four impact areas (society, environment, economy and health). The conference will be structured according to parallel sessions that will be based on the four impact areas. Interactive discussions will also be encouraged through plenary sessions and roundtable debates. The focus areas will be used to direct the presentations according to the GWP toolbox main themes, as follows:

- 1. The Enabling Environment** – to understand and create policies for water use, protection and conservation such as the preparation of a National Water Resources Strategy. Translating water policy into law, such as water rights, legislation for water quality as well as existing legislation reform. The allocation of financial resources to water needs such as investment policies, public sector institutional reform, role of the private sector, cost recovery and charging policies and investment appraisal.
- 2. Institutional Roles** – the characteristics and assessments of organisational frameworks and functions of - transboundary organisations, national apex bodies, river basin organizations, regulatory bodies, enforcement agencies, service providers, civil society institutions, community based organizations and local authorities. The responsibility split between local, regional, national and international. The governance and decision making mechanisms for public participation and equity are central here. A focus on the different levels of effective capacity building and knowledge sharing (human resources, institutional development and strengthening including civil society, etc) will be needed.
- 3. Management Instruments** – Water resources assessments in its entirety ranging from; understanding resources and needs; the water resources knowledge base, modelling in IWRM, developing water management indicators, combining development options, resource use and human interaction; river basin plans, risk assessment and management. The management of demand for water resources has become essential through using water more efficiently; improved efficiency of use, recycling and reuse. Social change instruments - encouraging a water-oriented civil society; education curricula on water management, training of professionals, training of trainers, communication with stakeholders, water campaigns and awareness raising, Conflict resolution, regulatory instruments for water allocation, use, quantity and quality, water services, land use controls, etc. could be additional topics. Economic instruments using value and prices for efficiency and equity, pricing of water and water services, pollution charges, Water markets and tradable permits, subsidies and incentives together with information management and exchange - improving knowledge for better water management. Information management systems and data sharing are the main topics for this theme.

## OUTCOMES

A key outcome of the conference will be a consolidated expert assessment of progress in IWRM, especially from the developing world. Key selected papers will also be published as a special referred issue of the Water SA Journal.

## UNESCO – IHP VII

The conference will also incorporate, as a parallel session, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Africa Regional meeting of the National Committees of UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme.

Aims of the IHP meeting:

- To follow-up on the Abuja (2006) recommendations;
- To engage the membership in discussions on the UNESCO IHP-VII implementation strategies; and
- To strengthen partnerships.

IHP is UNESCO's international scientific cooperative programme in water research, water resources management, education and capacity-building, and the only broadly-based science programme of the UN system in this area.

IHP's objectives are:

- To act as a vehicle through which Member States, cooperating professional and scientific organizations and individual experts can upgrade their knowledge of the water cycle, thereby increasing their capacity to better manage and develop their water resources.
- To develop techniques, methodologies and approaches to better define hydrological phenomena.
- To improve water management, locally and globally.
- To act as a catalyst to stimulate cooperation and dialogue in water science and management.
- To assess the sustainable development of vulnerable water resources .
- To serve as a platform for increasing awareness of global water issues.

## KEY DATES

Call for papers and posters abstracts	October 2007
Deadline for papers and posters	31 January 2008
Registration closes	01 February 2008

## REGSITRATION

For a registration form or more information, please send a message to:

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## ABOUT CAPE TOWN

Cape Town is regarded as one of the most beautiful cities in the world. The impressive presence of Table Mountain, flanked by the legendary Devil's Peak and historical Signal Hill, stands proudly above the city. Beautiful white sandy beaches along a peaceful coastline frame the Cape Peninsula, which is famed for its unique floral kingdom, bountiful rivers, vleis and dams and magnificent countryside. The surrounding area extends far into the winelands, green in summer and red-gold in autumn. Cape Town boasts a multitude of entertainment, ranging from outdoor activities and adventures in the sun to a roaring nightlife. The vast range of shopping opportunities includes haggling with traders at Greenmarket Square Flea Market, as well as breezing through sophisticated and stylish shopping malls.

<http://www.cape-town.info/>