



International Hydrological Programme of UNESCO

NATIONAL REPORT of the IRISH NATIONAL COMMITTEE
June 2006

1. ROLE OF THE IRISH IHP NATIONAL COMMITTEE

The Irish National Committee is the focal point in Ireland for internal and international cooperation in hydrology. It also has the role as national committee of the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID – a non-governmental organisation). During 1989, the role of the National Committee (IHP) was defined as a focus in Ireland for IHP activities and in particular:

- (i) to stimulate and facilitate co-operation and exchange of information between various organisations involved with hydrology in Ireland.
- (ii) to send / receive communications to / from UNESCO.
- (iii) to make suggestions about the draft plans for the successive programme phases.
- (iv) to recommend or supply names of persons suitable for acting as rapporteurs or working group members for IHP projects.
- (v) to supply Irish data for IHP projects.
- (vi) to encourage the undertaking by Irish organisations of hydrological projects pertinent to the current phase of IHP and stimulate such with financial contributions towards equipment.
- (vii) to facilitate and encourage Irish participation in international hydrological projects.
- (viii) to encourage participation by Irish hydrologists at relevant international conferences.
- (ix) to disseminate information about IHP to Irish organisations and individuals.
- (x) to form a library holding of UNESCO documents relating to or emanating from IHP phases - these include technical documents.
- (xi) to hold regular committee meetings.
- (xii) to hold or to assist in the holding of hydrologically relevant conferences,
- (xiii) to comment, as appropriate, on hydrological issues

2. ACTIVITIES OF THE IRISH IHP NATIONAL COMMITTEE

The Irish National Committee organises and convenes the Irish National Hydrology Seminar, held in November each year. The theme of these seminars deals with topical issues relating to water resources - at both global and river basin levels - and features papers, presentations and poster sessions from local authorities, universities and the private sector. International contributions are always welcome. The theme of this year's seminar is: **“Water Resources in Ireland and Climate Change”**, which has links with Theme I of the proposed IHPVII.

In 2003, the National Committee established the “Hydrology Ireland” website and maintains and updates this on an on-going basis (see: <http://www.opw.ie/hydrology>). This website gives details of recent publications, up-coming seminars, conferences, courses and other events relating to water resources, both nationally and internationally.

The committee comments on topical issues from time to time. In the last two years, the committee contributed to the development of government policy and activities in two areas:

- National Flood Policy Review – highlighting the need for involvement of society through flood hazard mapping, catchment-based flood risk planning, public awareness campaigns, research and development and application of improved modelling techniques. The policy was adopted by Government in 2004, and
- River Basin Management – in development of stakeholder involvement and integration of hydrology and water quality issues, particularly in relation to providing hydrological advice and guidance to the Water Framework Directive working groups in the areas of flow duration curves, sampling issues and flood related matters.



3. RESEARCH

The committee promotes focussed research by universities, government agencies and private interests, often funded by national and EU RTD programmes. The Environmental Protection Agency has funded specific programmes of research that are coordinated with the work of National and EU working groups involved in development of methods for the EU Water Framework. The Office of Public Works coordinates its own research programme in flood management. The Committee has been pleased to be associated with this work. Further research needs relate primarily to climate change, information and communication technology and wetland eco-hydrology.

Potential bottlenecks relate to limited management and support facilities for research and development. However, increased recognition of the role of local authorities in water management in its broadest sense has begun to provide some additional sources of funds.

4. CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER NATIONAL COMMITTEES AND INSTITUTIONS IN OTHER COUNTRIES

The Irish IHP National Committee has contributed in the past to the IHP FRIEND project and has funded attendance of experts at IHP and ICID technical conferences. Through EU and World Bank funded programmes, contributions have been made to international cooperation in water management. The Committee is keen to see continued cooperation in the future, and is actively seeking out opportunities to work, and share experience with, other National Committees.

The main benefit of Regional Meetings is seen as the promotion of such cooperation leading to best practice in water resources management applicable at sub-region and national scale.

5. CONTACT DETAILS

The contact details of the Secretary of the IHP Irish National Committee are given below:

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