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UNESCO'S WATER FAMILY

Item 8 of the provisional agenda

Summary

The number of water-related Category 2 Centres and Chairs expanded during the reporting period. Evaluation for the renewal of 3 Centres is in preparation and they will be presented at the next session of UNESCO's Executive Board in Autumn 2016. Some of the general agreements of Category 2 Centres are in the process of renewal and will be aligned with the new strategy for Category 2 Centres (37/C/18 Part 1 Annex 1). The Secretariat has established a coordination mechanism for water-related Category 2 Centres; a first meeting was held in December 2014 in Germany and a second meeting was held in December 2015 in Paris. The water-related Category 2 Centres met again in the first Science Centres Coordinatrion Meeting in May 2016 in Beijing. Two proposals for the establishment of water-related Category 2 centres from Brazil and Mexico were examined by the IHP Bureau and hereby proposed to the IHP Council. The recruitment process for the Rector of UNESCO-IHE is underway and the negotiation between UNESCO and the Government of the Netherlands (with the participation of the IHE Delft Foundation) for the renewal of the agreement is in progress. A new Coordinator for the World Water Assessment Programme was appointed in November 2015 and the 2016 WWDR was launched.

This document provides a brief account of the International Hydrological Programme's (IHP) cooperation within the UNESCO Water Family.

It specifically provides a progress report on the following issues;

8.1 The Status and operation of the UNESCO Water Family
8.2 Proposed centres under the auspices of UNESCO
8.3 UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education (category 1)
8.4 Nominations for office bearers in the governing board of UNESCO-IHE
8.5 World Water Assessment Programme

Status and operation of UNESCO's Water Family (agenda item 8.1)

1. UNESCO works to build the scientific knowledge base to help countries in the sustainable management of their water resources. This is done through its UNESCO Water Family comprising the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP), the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education, water Centres under the auspices of UNESCO and water related Chairs and UNITWIN Networks. UNESCO's Water Family operates as a global network that works together to implement the organization's strategic goals.

2. The network of 36 established water-related Centres under the auspices of UNESCO (Category 2 Institutes and Centres) contributes to the implementation of IHP at the international and regional level. The following six Centres were approved during the 38th Session of the General Conference in November 2015:

- African Regional Centre for Ecohydrology (ARCE), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- Central Laboratory for Environmental Monitoring (CLEQM), El-Qanater, Egypt
- Integrated and Multi-Disciplinary Water Resources Management Centre at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
- Water Research Centre at the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, Kuwait City, Kuwait
- International Centre for the Integrated Management of Watershed and Bio-resources in Arid and Semi-Arid Regions, Islamic Republic of Iran
- Regional Water Research Centre (RWRC) at the COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Abbottabad, Pakistan

In January 2016 the respective Governments were notified to inform UNESCO about a date for the official signature of the agreement. Up to date the Central Laboratory for Environmental Monitoring (CLEQM), El-Qanater, Egypt and the Integrated and Multi-Disciplinary Water Resources Management Centre at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece, have started the procedures to sign the agreement.

3. UNESCO's Water Network currently includes 36 water-related UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN networks. Five new Chairs were established in 2015 and the first half of 2016, with a focus on Hydropolitics (University of Geneva, Switzerland); Theory and Technology of Environmental Safety in Water Resources Control (Novosibirsk State University of Architecture and Civil Engineering, Russian Federation); Water and Culture (University of the Republic, Uruguay); Environmental History: Water and Indigenous Peoples (University of Arizona, USA) and Ecohydrology: Water for Ecosystems and Societies (University of Algarve, Portugal).

4. As of the date of the writing of this document, the status of pending signature, renewals and entry into force of existing agreements for category 2 centres is as follows:

Centre name	General Conference	Action
AFRICA		
African Centre for Global Change and Water Research in South Africa (ACGCWR)	37 C/ Resolution 28 (2013)	Negotiations on the Agreement continue; action expected from the Government
ARAB STATES		
Regional Centre for Training and Water Studies in Arid and Semi-Arid Regions (RCTWS), Cairo, Egypt	The agreement expired in 2007.	Agreement signed on the 14 May 2015. Needs the communication of the entry into force

Centre name	General Conference	Action
Regional Centre for Shared Aquifer Resources Management (RCSARM), Libya	Agreement signed in 2007.	Entry into force still missing. Renewal in 2017. No action can be currently pursued due to the political situation in the country
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC		
International Research and Training Centre on Erosion and Sedimentation, (IRTCES), Beijing, China	191 EX/Decision 14 Part XI; expired in 2011.	The agreement was aligned with the new model agreement and awaiting for the signature.
Regional Centre on Urban Water Management (RCUWM) in Tehran	The agreement expired in 2013.	The evaluation for renewal will be carried out in the coming months with the aim to present the renewal proposal at the next session of the Executive Board in Autumn 2016
Central Asian Regional Glaciological Centre, Almaty, Kazakhstan (CARGC)	36 C (2011)	Agreement signed in 2012. Not yet entered into force.
Regional Humid Tropics Hydrology and Water Resources Centre for South-East Asia and the Pacific, (HTC) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	Review completed in 2013, to be submitted to the Executive Board.	The Regional Bureau in Jakarta is negotiating the renewal of the agreement with the Government.
Regional Centre for Water Management Research in Arid Zones, Islamabad, Pakistan (RCWMRIAZ)	34 C (2007)	In process; draft agreement received in January 2016
International Centre for Water Security and Sustainable Management at the K-Water Institute, the Republic of Korea (i-WSSM)	37 C/Resolution 29 2013.	The agreement was realigned and awaiting decision on the date for the signature between the parties.
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN		
International Centre on Hydroinformatics for Integrated Water Resources Management, Brazil and Paraguay (CIH)	34 C/Resolution 30 (2007)	The aligned agreement of CIH was presented and approved by the 199th Session of UNESCO Executive Board in April 2016. The signature of the parties is pending
International Centre for Education, Capacity Building and Applied Research in Water (HIDROEX), Frutal, Brazil	35 C/20, Part VI (2009)	On transformation
Water Centre for Arid and Semi-arid Zones of Latin America and the Caribbean,	33 C (2005)	Currently under renewal; it should be hopefully presented to the 200th

Centre name	General Conference	Action
La Serena, Chile (CAZALAC)		session of UNESCO Executive Board in autumn 2016
Regional Centre on Urban Water Management for Latin America and the Caribbean, Cali, Colombia (RCUWM-LAC)	The agreement expired in 2013.	A letter was sent on 13 January 2016. Awaiting response from the Government on the status of the Centre.
Regional Centre for groundwater management for Latin America and the Caribbean, Montevideo, Uruguay (CeReGAS)	37 C (2013)	Agreement signed in 2014. Not yet entered into force
EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA		
International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre (IGRAC), Delft, the Netherlands	The agreement expires in 2016.	The evaluation for renewal was carried out in February 2016. The alignment of the agreement with the current strategy for category 2 centres and institutes is in progress. The proposal for renewal will be presented at the 200th session of the Executive Board, in Autumn 2016
European Regional Centre for Ecohydrology (ERCE), Lodz, Poland	Review completed in 2012; not introduced yet to the Executive Board.	Agreement negotiation continues. Tripartite agreement is being drafted to resolve legal issues.
International Centre on Coastal Ecohydrology, Faro, Portugal (ICCE)	35 C (2009)	The agreement was signed in 2010. Not yet entered into force
International Research and Training Centre on Urban Drainage, Belgrade, Serbia (IRTCUD)	24 C (1987)	Agreement signed in 1989. Awaiting response from the Government on the status of the Centre.

Out of the 36 Centres:

- Ten are awaiting to sign the agreement;
- Eight are under renewal (3 under the renewal process with ongoing evaluation and will probably be presented at the 200th session of UNESCO Executive Board in autumn 2016);
- Five did not yet enter into force;
- One is under transformation;
- 12 are fully in compliance with UNESCO rules and regulations.

Operation of the UNESCO Water Network (agenda item 8.1 cont.)

5. The IHP Secretariat has drafted a revised IHP strategy for water-related Category 2 Institutes and Centres (IHP/Bur-L/Ref. 2 Rev). The revisions aims at aligning the IHP strategy with the recent decisions of the General Conference and with the Bureau's recommendations. The strategy also aims at enhancing the coordination of water-related Institutes and Centres network to further integrate the Centres within other relevant IHP networks such as UNESCO Water related Chairs, and with the Strategic Plan of IHP-VIII. As recommended by the Bureau, the proposal responds to the need of Member States for guidelines on the process of Centre establishment and renewal. The Secretariat's proposal also addresses the roles and responsibilities of Centre focal points and establishes a coordination mechanism for water-related Category 2 Centres.

6. A database of Centres and chairs has been established on the IHP Secretariat server and is continuously updated. The next step includes the Science Sector development of the networking platform on UNESTEAM, UNESCO's online intranet collaborative space, which will provide workspaces for collaboration with external partners (Extranet), in particular for UNESCO water Centres and chairs to also allow better communication and networking. The objective is to broaden the reach of UNESCO water-related institutes and Centres and to increase the impacts and visibility of their activities while providing the framework to explore potential mutually beneficial collaborations through the exchange of knowledge, information, and contacts.

7. The IHP Secretariat has established a mechanism for Category 2 Centres to meet on a regular basis in order to discuss future potential global and regional cooperation between the Centres for the implementation of the IHP-VIII programmes and to identify joint activities to work on. A first meeting was held between 14 and 18 December 2014 in Koblenz, Germany and 19 centres attended.

8. The meeting was composed of different sessions, namely: (1) Introduction of water centres and their cooperation potential; (2) Global and regional cooperation for the implementation of the IHP programme; and, (3) Sustainable development goals and the post-2015 agenda. Different working groups in IHP initiatives have been established to address priorities activities and to develop joined programmes. The working group on hydro-hazards dealt with the International Flood Initiative (IFI), the International Drought Initiative (IDI) and the International Sediment Initiative (ISI) and discussed how to benefit from each of the programmes' results and progress, and whether it is possible to achieve synergies between the different initiatives.

9. Another meeting of the UNESCO Water Network, as a follow-up to the meeting in Koblenz in 2014, was held between 1 and 3 December 2015 during the COP21 and attended by 26 between centres and chairs (15 and 11 respectively). The participants

attended the first day of the International Conference “Water, Megacities and Global Change” in Paris headquarters while on 2 December attended the Water and Climate Day at COP21 in the UNESCO booth where they took part in 8 events, aimed at bringing into the international debate the perspectives of the UNESCO Water Family in the context of water and climate change. The meeting on 3 December mainly focused on the sensitization of the Water Family on the SDG with particular emphasis on the monitoring and reporting of Goal 6 on water-related targets and indicators. It also considered enhancing the networking, the joint implementation of activities and programmes as well as the organization of regular meetings of Centres and Chairs, regionally and on thematic areas. As a follow up to the meeting 9 Water Chairs and 6 Centres jointly developed in early 2016 a USD 4 Million Master course proposal in the framework of the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees (EMJMD) with the title “Advanced Studies in Global Water Science” and submitted to the European Union for funding. The curriculum developed for this EMJMD addresses four major thematic areas, such as (1) aquatic ecosystem functioning and restoration, (2) water technologies, monitoring, data analysis and modelling, (3) IWRM, economy, water law and governance and (4) personal skills development (extra knowledge and skills to students, such as language courses, water history and water culture, scientific writing and communication skills).

10. From 15 to 18 May 2016, the Natural Science Sector organized the 1st UNESCO Science Centres Coordination Meeting, in Beijing, China. This meeting was co-hosted by UNESCO Science Sector, the Chinese Academy of Engineering and the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and supported by the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO. Funds to support some of the water centres’ attendance were made available from the Ministry of Environment of Germany through the International Centre on Water Resources and Adaptation to Global Changes, a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO based in Koblenz, Germany. The meeting gathered 45 out of the 65 centres in the Science Sector, plus the 2 Category 1 centres ICTP and UNESCO-IHE, as well as TWAS and WWAP. IHP was represented by 22 category 2 water centres (out of 36) and 1 category 1 Centre (UNESCO-IHE).

11. The major outcome of the meeting was the “Beijing Action Plan”, which calls for several actions such as a) alignment with the strategic plans and programmes of each UNESCO Science Centre with the relevant SDGs, regional development agendas, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, and map the contributions of each Centre towards these agreements; b) make available and regularly update standardized information brief on the mandate, areas of expertise, deliverables, services, products and tools of each Centre for dissemination to UNESCO’s member states and for the attention of the Governing Bodies of the Organization; c) enhance coordination and exchange between UNESCO Science Centres through existing and new UNESCO initiatives, as well as bilateral or multilateral collaboration; d) the establishment of an Information and Knowledge Sharing Platform; e) facilitate Member States to strategically diversify Category 2 Centres especially in Africa and Arab States, in all mandates of Natural Science Sector; f) build mutual capacity realizing the full potential of cooperation among the Centres; g) encourage Member States on a voluntary basis to enable the organization of regular meetings of UNESCO Science Centres at global, interregional and regional levels; h) develop joint efforts to approach funding bodies for cooperative projects and programmes that bring together complementary resources and scientific expertise to meet the specific needs and requirements of UNESCO’s member states; h) promote and advocate through public information channels - including UNESCO publications, workshops and information meetings - best practices that demonstrate how UNESCO Science Centres benefit societies.

Proposed Centres under the auspices of UNESCO (agenda item 8.2)

Proposed Centre on Water Security, in Mexico

12. On 28 October 2014, the Government of Mexico through its Permanent Delegation to UNESCO submitted a proposal to the Director-General and the Secretary of IHP for the establishment of a "Centre on Water Security" as a category 2 centre hosted by the Institute of Engineering of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (II-UNAM) and the Mexican Institute of Water Technology (IMTA).

13. The aim of the proposed Centre is to enhance scientific cooperation at the regional level and to improve the understanding of water research, with a focus on water security as a framework to cross the common divides of water services and resources. (see reference document IHP/IC-XXII/Ref.1).

14. The proposal was discussed in detail at the technical meeting of the members of the IHP Bureau (November 2014) and endorsed by the 52nd session of the IHP Bureau (June 2015).

Proposed International Centre on Water and Transdisciplinary, in the Federative Republic of Brazil

15. On 12 April and 3 May 2016, the government of the Federative Republic of Brazil through its Permanent Delegation to UNESCO submitted a proposal to the Secretary of IHP for the establishment of an "International Centre on Water and Transdisciplinary" (CIRAT) as a category 2 centre hosted by the Botanical Garden in Brasília.

16. CIRAT has been operating since 2009 as a venue to advance transdisciplinary water-related knowledge. It has been working to promote state-of-the-art water-related projects and research. Additionally, it connects researchers from different parts of Brazil and the world, seeking integration of knowledge that is often scattered see reference document IHP/IC-XXII/Ref.2).

17. Following a 53rd IHP Bureau decision in April 2016, the Secretariat organized an out-of-session consultation of the Bureau members to decide whether the proposal could be presented at the 22nd IHP Council. The majority of the members of the IHP Bureau agreed to present it to the consideration of IHP Council.

UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education (category 1) (agenda item 8.3)

18. The current Operational and Cooperation Agreements ensuring the status of UNESCO-IHE as a Category 1 Institute expire on 31 December 2016 and they envisage the possibility of an extension until December 2018. However, the ongoing consultations between UNESCO and the Government of the Netherlands, with the participation of the IHE Delft Foundation, are introducing modifications, which require the renewal of the agreement(s), rather than the extension of the current ones. By 38 C/ Resolution 20, the General Conference requested the Director-General to submit to the Executive Board (EX), at its 200th session, a new proposed version of the Operational Agreement between

UNESCO and the Government of the Netherlands for UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education and, if necessary, a revised version of its Statutes. IOS, on behalf of the Government of the Netherlands and in consultation with UNESCO-IHE and the IHE Delft Foundation is currently carrying out the statutory evaluation of the Institute, one of the conditions for the renewal of the agreements. Document 199EX/25, presented the “Report on progress on the renewal and revision of the Operational Agreement between UNESCO and the Government of the Netherlands on the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education and revision of the Statutes of the Institute” to the members of the EX and requested the Director-General to ensure that the new proposed agreement(s) is (are) in compliance with rules and regulations of UNESCO and fully implement(s) the recommendations of the external auditor of category 1 institutes.

19. As of 2010 and until 2015, the Institute followed the 'Strategic Directions - UNESCO-IHE in 2020'[1] and achieved significant progress, including increase of research productivity and quality, the establishment of several joint education programmes with partners worldwide (those from IHP), newly formulated research themes, increased efforts at the science-policy interface (achieving impact), stronger academic leadership, increased e-learning offerings, an updated HR policy, and a more effective functioning of process management units such as the liaison office, communication office and education bureau. External reviews of the education and research programmes resulted in very favorable assessments. The global position of the Institute in this regard has been further strengthened, as evidenced by the global/regional visibility and involvement in key policy processes (e.g. the post-2015 development agenda, SDG formulation, contribution to various boards and committees). However, two key elements of the 2020 strategy, namely the establishment of regional UNESCO-IHE institutes, and obtaining Ph.D. granting rights, could not be implemented and will not be pursued (decision in November 2013). As a result of this, the Governing Board encouraged the Institute to strengthen its current partnerships for the implementation of the ongoing as well as new joint and double degree programmes. Owing to this, the Institute engaged in an internal consultative process in order to propose new strategic directions for UNESCO-IHE, focusing on education, research and innovation and capacity development for social innovation.

20. The 16th session of the UNESCO-IHE Governing Board (Delft, 19-20 November 2015) approved the *UNESCO-IHE Strategy 2015-2020: Equipping people and organizations to solve water and development challenges worldwide, contributing to the UN Sustainable Development Goals*. It foresees greater synergy between UNESCO-IHE's three strategic drivers, education, capacity development and research, and more focus on the link between the funding and financial outlook and budget requirements. It also contains ample linkages between research and innovation agenda of UNESCO-IHE and the IHP-VIII.

21. The accreditation of the UNESCO-IHE MSc programmes fall currently under the regime of the Netherlands and Flanders Accreditation Organization (NVAO). The Institutional Audit has been fully and successfully completed. NVAO confirmed to have 'granted' the Institutional Audit to UNESCO-IHE. The decision was based on the positive assessment report by the audit committee that visited UNESCO-IHE in January 2015. The validity of this Institutional Audit is until 7 April 2020. The NVAO accreditation of the MSc programmes is valid until 31 December 2019. This accreditation will have to be registered with the IHE Delft Foundation prior to signing a new operational agreement for UNESCO-IHE.

[1] The 'Strategic Directions - UNESCO-IHE in 2020' was later replaced by UNESCO-IHE Strategy 2015-2020

Governance

22. The Rector of UNESCO-IHE retired and Mr. Stefan Uhlenbrook, Vice-Rector of Academic and Student Affairs, served as the Officer-in-Charge from 10 November 2014. Mr Fritz Holzwarth has been appointed as Rector ad interim as of 1 November 2015. Mr Holzwarth will in principle remain in this post until the ongoing recruitment of the new Rector is completed. Since 1 March 2016, the Institute welcomed a new Business Director, Mr Johan van Dijk.

23. The 16th session of the UNESCO-IHE Governing Board unanimously elected Ms Iwona Wagner as its new Chairperson and welcomed three new members: Mr Ali Reza Daemi from Iran, Deputy Minister for planning and economic affairs at Ministry of Energy; Mr Ahmet Saatci from the Turkish Water Institute (SUEN); and Mr Michael Mutale from Zambia, Independent Consultant representing the UNESCO-IHE alumni community.

Collaboration with UNESCO and the water sector

24. UNESCO-IHE, the University for Peace in Costa Rica, and Oregon State University, have jointly developed a new Master's programme on "Water Cooperation and Peace" in collaboration with UNESCO's "From Potential Conflict to Cooperation Potential, PCCP" project. The goal of this new initiative is to broaden the scope of approach to conflict and peace, provide a more theoretical dimension to conflict resolution, engage multi-level scales of conflict dimensions and strengthen skills through highly experiential learning opportunities. The PCCP project (See FY7) continues to be an essential part of the Water Conflict Management course at UNESCO-IHE.

25. In the framework of the UNESCO IHP project (GGRETA), the Institute organized jointly with the International Groundwater Assessment Centre (IGRAC) category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO (C2C), its in-house partner, a tailor-made training on advanced groundwater monitoring and analysis for a group of groundwater professionals from Uzbekistan. Another tailor-made training was organized on Groundwater data collection and interpretation for Caribbean countries in St. Kitts and Nevis under the coordination of the UNESCO Regional Office for Science in Latin America and the Caribbean (Uruguay).

26. UNESCO-IHE contributed to the World Water Development Report 2016 on "Water and Jobs", particularly to the chapters on addressing capacity development needs and on scientific and technological innovation (Uta Wehn de Montalvo and Leonardo Alfonso Segura).

27. Ongoing agreements of UNESCO-IHE with UNESCO C2C for capacity development, research and/or education related activities include:

- Collaboration agreement with the International Centre for Water Hazard and Risk Management (ICHARM, Japan). An associated partner in the EU-sponsored Erasmus Mundus Flood Risk Management MSc programme.
- Institutional strengthening project with the HidroEx Foundation (Brazil). Ph.D. and postdoctoral research activities.
- Education collaboration with the Regional Centre on Urban Water Management for Latin America and the Caribbean (CINARA, Colombia). Ongoing joint Water Science and Engineering programme, specialisation Hydroinformatics.
- Hosting of the International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre (IGRAC), Delft, Netherlands. Joint tailor made training implementation, among others.

Nominations for office bearers in the governing board of UNESCO-IHE (agenda item 8.4)

28. Six representatives of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) are elected by the Intergovernmental Council to be part of the Governing Board of the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education.

According to Article XIII of the Statutes of UNESCO-IHE, these representatives are elected for four years. Appointments are organized so that every two years three members are outgoing.

Members of the Governing Board serving until the elections take place during the 22nd session of the Intergovernmental Council of IHP (June 2016) are:

- Ms Iwona Wagner (Poland, Region II – Eastern and Central Europe)
- Mr Benedito Braga (Brazil, Region III – Latin America and the Caribbean)
- Mr Gabriel Ebosele Oteze (Nigeria, Region Va – Africa)

Members of the Governing Board serving until June 2018 are:

- Mr Ahmet Saatci (Turkey, Region I – Western Europe and North America)
- Mr Ali Riza Daemi (Iran, Region IV – Asia and the Pacific)
- Mr Abdin Salih (Sudan, Region Vb – the Arab States)

Elections will, therefore, be held during the 22nd session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council taking place in Paris, 13—17 June 2016, to name one IHP representative to the UNESCO-IHE Board of Governors from each of the following three electoral groups:

- Region II – Eastern and Central Europe
- Region III – Latin America and the Caribbean
- Region Va – Africa.

United Nations World Water Assessment Programme (agenda item 8.5)

29. The United Nations World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) of UNESCO coordinates the efforts of 31 members (UN Agencies, Organizations, Funds and Programmes) and 38 partners constituting UN-Water (the coordination mechanism of the UN system on freshwater) to produce the United Nations World Water Development Report (WWDR). WWAP is structurally a part of the Division of Water Sciences, and it is housed in the Programme Office for the Global Water Assessment in Perugia, Italy.

30. WWAP is an extrabudgetary programme funded by donors. Since its establishment, the WWAP Secretariat received financial and in-kind support from a number of donor countries (Andorra, Denmark, France, Germany, Mexico, Norway, Spain, Turkey, UK) while the programme as a whole was funded by the Japanese Government from 2000 to 2006. The Government of Norway funded the World Water Scenarios Project of WWAP through UN-Water.

31. The Government of Italy is the lead donor, funding WWAP since 2007. Since June 2009, the Secretariat is based in Perugia (Italy) in premises generously provided by the Region of Umbria.

32. The FIT agreement with the Italian Ministry of Land, Environment and Sea provided necessary funding for WWAP to function from 2007 until 2012. This yielded the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Italian Government and UNESCO on WWAP. The MoU was ratified in Italian Parliament in August 2013 and became a national law. This law defines that the funding (1.65 million Euros per year) required for WWAP core activities will be provided from Italian national budget for an undetermined period thus guaranteeing its continuity. However, the agreed amount has been continuously declining since 2014 corresponding to a reduction of over 20% as of 2016. This significant reduction has caused significant financial problems and prevented WWAP from fully delivering on what was defined in the MoU as its mandate.

33. In line with the requirements of the concluded FIT agreement with the Italian Ministry of Land, Environment and Sea, an evaluation was conducted in the first half of 2015 by a team of external evaluators in collaboration with UNESCO's Internal Oversight Service (IOS). The evaluation aimed at assessing the performance of the WWAP for the 2007-2014 period and producing recommendations on strategic orientation of the Programme.

34. Based on evidence (website visits, downloads of the report and international press coverage), the evaluation registered the flagship status of the WWDR and the good work done by WWAP during the evaluation period. The findings also concluded that the Report is one of the most visible publications of UNESCO and it continues to be an authoritative source of information on freshwater. The capacity and experience to manage and coordinate the production of WWDR are identified as important assets of the WWAP Secretariat.

35. The external evaluators made eight recommendations that ranged from communication strategy to strengthening the position of the WWAP and WWDR in 2030 agenda. These recommendations were accepted to a large degree and actions are being taken to operationalize suggestions. Among the key recommendations, assigning WWAP a permanent Coordinator is fulfilled in line with the DG's Ivory Note on 18 September 2015, concerning the appointment of Mr Stefan Uhlenbrook as the 3rd Coordinator of the Programme since its establishment in 2000.

36. Data and indicators form the science basis of the WWDR and WWAP has always been an active participant of UN-Water task forces on these matters. Since 2014, the Secretariat has been participating in interagency working groups of the UN-Water's Integrated Monitoring Initiative (GEMI) to contribute to the significant discussions on SDG 6.

37. WWAP aspires to play a central role on SDG 6 progress reporting by building on its 16 years of experience in reporting on water-related challenges and best practices through the WWDR series -- the most authoritative science-based and policy-oriented publication of the UN System on freshwater.

38. It is anticipated that extensive reporting for each of the eight targets and 11 indicators of SDG 6 will be led by the respective custodian UN Agencies. As the policy impact of the target/indicator oriented reports is likely limited, the idea is to produce regularly a SDG 6 Synthesis Report that will add value by evaluating and synthesizing the detailed target/indicator reports and generating main policy recommendations. Therefore, understanding the inter-linkages between the SDG 6 targets as well as between SDG 6 and all other 16 SDGs is critical.

39. Currently, a UN-Water task force is reviewing the present related reporting mechanisms of all UN-Water members and designs the Synthesis Report (focus, extent,

periodicity, contributors, structure/outline etc.). The task force is chaired by the WWAP Coordinator and all related UN Agencies participate.

40. WWAP is also providing technical guidance to UN-Water's GEMI project, among others, related to assessing the degree of monitoring IWRM and disaggregation of SDG 6 indicators by sex.

41. Since 2012, gender mainstreaming is an important part of the process for all WWAP publications and activities. In 2014, WWAP launched a project to develop a methodology for sex-disaggregated data collection and produced gender-sensitive indicators. These aim to address the considerable data gap on gender and water issues globally. The methodology has been published and launched at the General Conference of UNESCO in 2015. Through this project WWAP is advocating for the implementation of sex-disaggregated water indicators in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and, in particular, in the monitoring framework of the SDG 6. Consequently, WWAP developed a methodology, through Gender-Sensitive Water Monitoring Assessment and Reporting project, for sex-disaggregated data collection and produced a tool-kit. The toolkit includes a short set of high-priority water indicators for which sex-disaggregated data is needed, methodologies for collecting and assessing such data, a manual for data gathering in the field, and a questionnaire for practitioners on sex-disaggregated interviews and data collection. These aim to address the considerable data gap on gender and water issues globally. The African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) formally committed in November 2014 to utilize WWAP-produced gender indicators for the water assessment of the African Region.