

International Hydrological Programme

23rd session of the Intergovernmental Council
(Paris, 11-15 June 2018)

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR AN EVALUATION OF THE FLAGSHIP INITIATIVES UNDER THE UNESCO INTERNATIONAL HYDROLOGICAL PROGRAMME

Item 6.6 of the provisional agenda

Summary

This document presents the text of the Terms of Reference (ToRs) for an evaluation of the Flagship Initiatives under the UNESCO International Hydrological Programme.

Terms of Reference for an Evaluation of the Flagships Initiatives under the UNESCO International Hydrological Programme

1. INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the Terms of Reference for the first stand-alone external evaluation of the flagships of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) of UNESCO. The evaluation will take place in late 2017 and early 2018. This will enable the IHP Working Group to present recommendations to the 23rd IHP Council meeting scheduled for June 2018.

2. BACKGROUND

The International Hydrological Programme (IHP) is the only intergovernmental programme of the UN system devoted to water research, water resources management, education and capacity building. The IHP was implemented in six-year programmatic time intervals and has now, in its eighth phase (2014-2021), shifted to an eight-year cycle following UNESCO's overall quadrennial approach.

As a global level science and education programme, IHP covers a wide spectrum of initiatives, some of them at the programme level. Within the context of IHP phase VIII, the IHP Secretariat manages and implements a number of Flagship projects/initiatives (hereinafter "Flagships"), in collaboration with key partners, such as World Meteorological Organization, International Association of Hydrological Sciences, United Nations University, United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and International Atomic Energy Agency. Other key partners can be part of the UNESCO Water family, including institutions affiliated with UNESCO ("category 2 centres") as well as UNESCO water Chairs and UNITWIN networks. Most of these flagship initiatives are funded through regular budget, but some have extrabudgetary funding from different governments around the world.

The following fourteen flagship initiatives are currently managed by the IHP Secretariat (in alphabetical order and with date of creation):

- FRIEND: Flow Regimes from International Experimental and Network Data (1985),
- GRAPHIC: Groundwater Resources Assessment under the Pressures of Humanity and Climate Change (2004),
- G-WADI: Global Network on Water and Development Information in Arid Lands (2002),
- HELP: Hydrology for the Environment, Life and Policy (1999),
- IDI: International Drought Initiative (2010),
- IFI: International Flood Initiative (2005),
- IIWQ: International Initiative on Water Quality (2012),
- ISARM: Internationally Shared Aquifer Resources Management (2000),
- ISI: International Sediment Initiative (2004),
- JIHP: Joint International Isotope Hydrology Programme (2000),
- MAR: Managed Aquifer Recharge (2002),
- PCCP: From Potential Conflict to Cooperation Potential (2001),
- UWMP: Urban Water Management Programme (2008), and
- WHYMAP: World Hydrogeological Map (2000).

These flagships have a different scopes, activities and distribution methods.

The principal objective of these Flagship projects is to cover in a coordinated manner contributions that assist in faster and better implementation of IHP themes. These initiatives comprise tasks and activities that are interlinked and that can be jointly implemented by different UNESCO water family actors or partners. Two of IHP's cross-cutting programmes, FRIEND and HELP, for instance, go beyond a single IHP theme to all IHP themes, through their operational concepts.

At its 53rd session, held in April 2016, the IHP Bureau, while discussing the implementation of resolution XXI-8 "Reviewing and monitoring of IHP Programmes" (established by the 21st IHP Council session), decided to reactivate the Working Group that had been tasked with the development of the evaluation framework. The IHP Bureau also requested the IHP Secretariat to facilitate this process and report on the results at the 22nd IHP Council in June 2018. The aim of this evaluation is to identify which of these Flagship initiatives should be modified, receive additional support from Member States, be terminated or handed over to other entities, considering the current needs from Member States and IHP-VIII.

A more elaborated background of the objectives, activities, budgetary information and duration of the individual Flagships can be found in the desk studies, prepared by the IHP Secretariat and available on demand.

In 2014, an external evaluation of Phase VII (2008-2013) of the IHP was completed under the oversight of the UNESCO Internal Oversight Service (IOS). This evaluation includes relevant findings related to the flagship initiatives, and therefore should be taken into account, as well as the 2009 external evaluation of UNESCO's Strategic Programme Objective 3 (Leveraging scientific knowledge for the benefit of the environment and the management of natural resources). A summary of the IHP VII evaluation can be found as Annex II. The full evaluation of Phase VII can be found on the website of the IOS (<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002280/228062E.pdf>).

3. OVERALL PURPOSE AND USE

The purpose of the evaluation is to identify which of the IHP Flagship initiatives should be modified, receive additional support from Member States, be terminated or handed over to other entities, considering the current needs from Member States and IHP-VIII. Moreover, the main purpose of the evaluation is to assess the performance (activities, outputs, outcomes) of the IHP Flagships during their full period of activity (from establishment until present) and to provide recommendations for the future.

The findings and recommendations of the evaluation will:

- Provide guidance to UNESCO on the organizational structure of the Flagships and their configuration within UNESCO-IHP.
- Provide guidance on the strategic focus of the Flagships and the mechanisms for effective programme delivery.
- Provide evidence (to the donors) about the key achievements and added value of each Flagship.

The main users of the evaluation will be the IHP Secretariat, the main donors to the Flagships and the wider policy and academic community in the field of water.

4. OVERALL SCOPE

Drawing from their performance and taking into consideration their date of establishment that varies from four to 31 years, the evaluation will focus on the following dimensions:

1. The institutional setting of the Flagships, particularly their configuration within UNESCO-IHP,
2. The relevance of IHP Flagship activities,
3. The efficiency a of IHP Flagship activities,
4. The effectiveness of IHP Flagship activities,
5. The financial situation of the Flagships and its effect on their performance,
6. The developed methodology, the dissemination approach, and the quality and effects of the products delivered by the Flagships in terms of academic and policy influence and use.

On each of these dimensions, the evaluation will adopt a retrospective and forward-looking perspective with action-oriented recommendations formulated based on substantive findings.

The main questions of the evaluation will be further refined in the evaluation's inception report. Indicative questions are provided below. These pertain to each Flagship separately as well as to them all taken as a whole.

- The relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of IHP Flagships' activities:
 - What have been the Flagship's major activities?
 - To what extent have these activities been:
 - relevant (from the perspective of UNESCO and other relevant institutional stakeholders and beneficiaries)?
 - efficient (in terms of the use of financial and human resources)
 - effective (in terms of outreach and contribution to the achievement of UNESCO's objectives as well as in terms of driving change for the beneficiaries)?
- The institutional setting of the Flagships, particularly their configuration within UNESCO-IHP:
 - What has been the role and added value of the Flagship within UNESCO and the IHP? Is there a clear institutional position within the IHP-VIII phase?
 - What should the role and added value of the Flagship be within UNESCO and the IHP and, if necessary, how can this be improved? What are the main challenges of the current institutional setting and how can they be turned into opportunities?
 - How are the activities of the Flagship contributing to the work of other UNESCO entities and vice versa? If they are contributing, are there institutional challenges in this collaboration and can they be turned into opportunities?
- The financial situation of the Flagships and its effect on their performance:
 - To what extent are the financial resources allocated directly to the Flagship? Is there a clear allocation of funding to the Flagship or are the financial resources for the Flagship part of a larger budget without clear specification of the allocation?
 - To what extent have financial constraints affected the activities and outputs of the Flagship?
 - What are the financial risks in the current funding situation? How can the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the Flagship's core financial resources be enhanced?
 - How can the Flagship's extrabudgetary funding base be strengthened?
- The approach, quality and effects of the products delivered by the Flagships in terms of academic and policy influence and use:
 - What are the products delivered by the Flagship?

- Are they established with participation of other partners and if so, what are the mechanisms used for ensuring stakeholder participation? How efficient and effective are these mechanisms?
- What activities were undertaken to enhance the visibility and outreach of the Flagship's products?
- Has there been an adequate strategy and funding for communication and information dissemination?
- What activities were undertaken to strengthen the visibility of the donor and UNESCO?
- What have been the effects of the products of the Flagships in terms of academic and policy influence and use? To what extent do they offer unique added value?

5. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation will include the following methodological elements (tasks):

1. An extensive study of key Flagship documents, as well as any other relevant documentation that provides insights into the evaluation questions.
2. Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders (face to face/phone/skype): UNESCO current and former staff (SC/HYD), partners, stakeholders, relevant leading researchers and decision makers.
3. Policy influence and use analysis: Based on semi-structured interviews (phone/skype) and an online survey (plus bibliometric analysis, media analysis and Internet searches).
4. Academic influence and use analysis: Based on semi-structured interviews (phone/skype), a bibliometric analysis of academic databases and media analysis and Internet searches.

At the start of the data collection process, the IHP Secretariat will provide desk studies on each Flagship initiative and other comprehensive documentation about the Flagships to the external evaluator. For the preparation of the proposal, the potential external evaluator is invited to explore the web site of UNESCO (<http://www.unesco.org>) and that of the IHP (<http://en.unesco.org/themes/water-security/hydrology/programmes>).

The evaluator should submit an inception report at the end of the initial stage of the evaluation to develop and agree upon the detailed methodological approach.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The IHP Secretariat is responsible for managing the evaluation and for assuring the quality of the deliverables. The evaluation focal point in the Executive Office of the Natural Sciences Sector (SC/EO) of UNESCO will support the evaluation by providing specific inputs to the Terms of Reference, participation in the reference group, selection of the external consultant, the inception report and the final report. In addition, UNESCO's Internal Oversight Service (IOS) will provide any necessary backstopping.

A reference group will be established to accompany the evaluation process and provide overall guidance and quality assurance, including feedback on the Terms of Reference, the inception report, evaluation methodology and the draft final report. The reference group shall be consulted periodically during the evaluation, and meet as necessary.

The external consultant will be responsible for his/her own logistics: office space, administrative and secretarial support, telecommunications, printing of documentation, etc. The external consultant will also be responsible for the execution of the data collection work plan. IHP will

facilitate this process to the extent possible by providing contact information and relevant documentation.

The division of labour in data collection, analysis and reporting is presented in the table below:

Activity or output	Division of labour	Responsible for delivery
Desk studies	IHP Secretariat	IHP Secretariat
Inception report	External evaluator	External evaluator
Interviews with key stakeholders	External evaluator; IHP to facilitate	External evaluator
Survey	External evaluator	External evaluator
Bibliometric analysis	External evaluator	External evaluator
Draft evaluation report	External evaluator with feedback from SC/EO and the evaluation reference group	External evaluator (with final quality assurance by SC/EO)
Final evaluation report	External evaluator with inputs from SC/EO and the evaluation reference group	External evaluator (with final quality assurance by SC/EO)

Qualifications

The external (senior) evaluator should possess the following qualifications:

- No previous involvement in the implementation of any of the IHP Flagship activities;
- At least 10 years of professional experience in programme and policy evaluation (preferably within the context of developing countries and with a focus on water or a natural science);
- Advanced degree (Ph.D. preferred) in the natural or water-related sciences, or advanced degree in another field but with extensive professional experience in water-related research and policy initiatives;
- Preferred current or past (long-term) affiliation with an academic institution (fellow, staff, emeritus);
- Experience in incorporating gender perspectives in evaluation;
- Excellent oral communication and report writing skills in English.

Desirable qualifications:

- Knowledge of the UN system, UNESCO and other international organizations;
- Previous evaluation assignments for a United Nations body;
- Experience in policy and programme evaluation in the context of international development;
- Experience in the evaluation of policy-oriented research programmes;
- Knowledge of international debates on water and sustainable development;
- Additional UN languages, especially French or Spanish.

7. BUDGET

The evaluation has a draft budget allowing for approximately 45-50 days of professional time, including travel. Additionally, the evaluator(s) is/are expected to travel to Paris at least once to participate in a kick-off meeting during the inception phase, to conduct interviews during the data

collection phase, and/or to hold a stakeholder workshop for discussing and validating findings and recommendations. Some of these tasks may be conducted through virtual meeting via Skype or video conference. The assignment may include missions to collect information and interview relevant Flagship stakeholders.

Due to the anticipated end of the biennium account closures, the contract for this assignment will be split into two parts, with one to cover up to 31 December 2017 and a second contract to cover from 1 January 2018. This will ensure payments are not delayed.

8. DELIVERABLES AND SCHEDULE

The external consultant(s) will be responsible for the following deliverables:

1. An inception report (max. 10 pages) will contain the intervention logic of the programme (based on desk studies and discussions), an evaluation plan (including refined evaluation questions), the methodological framework for the evaluation (including an evaluation matrix, which shows the relationships between the main evaluation questions and the data collection methods/sources) and a list of reviewed documents.
2. A draft evaluation report, based on a reference group workshop, facilitated by the evaluation team to discuss preliminary evaluation findings and conclusions.
3. A final evaluation report, based on the review of the draft evaluation report by the reference group, which presents a forward-looking analytical perspective with concrete recommendations for future improvements. The final report will present the following elements
 - a. Executive Summary (max. 4 pages)
 - b. Evaluation purpose and scope
 - c. Evaluation methodology
 - d. Descriptions of each Flagship
 - e. Findings
 - f. Lessons learned
 - g. Recommendations
 - h. Annexes

Activity /Deliverable	Deadline
Call for proposals	July/August 2017
Selection of consultant	August/September 2017
Inception meeting	September 2017
Inception note	End September 2017
Data collection and analysis phase	October/November 2017
Draft evaluation report	January 2018
Final evaluation report	15 March 2018

9. HOW TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

Your electronic offer comprised of a technical proposal and a financial proposal, attached in two separate files, shall be sent to the following email address no later than **Friday, 18 August 2017, 23:59 CET**:

For any requests for clarification, please contact Mr Alexandros Makarigakis (a.makarigakis@unesco.org).