

INTERNATIONAL GLOSSARY OF WATER (IGW)

Communication and mutual understanding require unambiguous terminology in research, planning and implementation of actions. The terminology is especially crucial in hydrology where we encounter different scientific and professional disciplines from natural sciences, social sciences, engineering, biotechnology to, and last but not least, health sciences. Different disciplines, not least UN offices, use the same terminology with different meanings and different terminology for the same purpose.

The need for the International Glossary Hydrology (IGH) prompted to the establishment of the IGH Commission at the WMO in 1961 and then the WMO/UNESCO Joint Commission in 1967 as an IHD 1965-1975 action. The work of the Joint Commission resulted in the publication of IGH in 1974, 1992 and 2013. At the end of the twentieth century, IHP UNESCO launched an action to produce a terminology dictionary in national languages. A series of dictionaries compiled from different languages can be downloaded under <https://www.lexicool.com/online-dictionary.asp?FSP=C16&FKW=hydrology>

UN Sustainable Development Goals asks for further development of IGH in collaboration with UN agencies: WMO, FAO, ILO, UNDP, UNECE, CEO Water Mandate, UN Environment, UNESCO, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNU, WHO, the World Bank Group, IHP UNESCO water family and international professional organizations like IUGG etc.

Continuing work at IGH will help to eliminate confusion and abuse in communication across disciplines, offices and countries when using ambiguous terms. The new edition, like the existing ones, will help with scientific work, education and communication between different disciplines and countries.

We propose the establishment of a commission under the custody of IHP UNESCO to update the IGH to an IGW. The task of the commission is primarily to lead the work for SDG purposes. It may, however, later assume the responsibility of supplementing the IGH according to the needs and requirements of the UN. The Commission should have no more than five members.
Suggestion is: IHP UNESCO, WMO; FAO, UNECE and UN water.

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