Global Water Partnership

FINAL DRAFT

Knowledge Management Approach

www.gwp.org

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Contents

Why this document?

The purpose of this paper is to articulate GWP's Knowledge Management Approach (KMA). This is not a knowledge management *strategy* because it does not say where GWP is going with its knowledge or why. Rather, this is an *approach*, describing how GWP executes the KM function.

The KMA outlined in this paper is based on many reviews, e.g., Mid-Term Review for the 2009-2013 strategy period, Internal Review of GWP Strategy 2009-2013, Governance and Financing Review 2014 (Dalberg), and the Knowledge Management and Organizational Review 2015 (PEM). In addition, other documents (e.g., Addressing the GWP Technical Function, 2009) and meetings (e.g., Regional Days 2012-2015) have informed the contents of this KMA. (In the past, GWP often spoke of the "GWP technical function" to describe "the set of functions through which GWP services knowledge management needs (generation, synthesis, dissemination) of the different elements of the network, at global, regional and country levels." The term is used in this paper.)

The Dalberg and PEM reports clearly noted that the practice of KM in GWP is sub-optimal. The communication among GWP entities (Technical Committee, Secretariat, RWPs, CWPs, network, and knowledge partners) should be improved if GWP is to be the 'go to' place for knowledge on water security.

This paper is being prepared during a time when the global development community has adopted the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals including a dedicated goal on water (#6). Furthermore, the governance and finance reform anticipate new accountability frameworks.

In this context of change, a shared understanding by all stakeholders of GWP's KMA is essential. This KMA will inform the way GWP 'lives' KM in the remaining years of its current strategy period (2016-2019).

For the purposes of this paper, a standard definition of knowledge management will suffice: "the explicit and systematic management of vital knowledge and its associated processes of creating, gathering, organizing, diffusion, use and exploitation, in pursuit of organizational objectives."

Guiding principles

Partnership

GWP, as a global action network, implements its programme through an array of partnerships and coalitions. It manages its knowledge by relying on the expertise of individuals and organisations through a fairly decentralized model. A network so organised – loosely but committed to 'deliverables' – should be agile and cohesive ('one GWP').

Synergy

GWP explores and exploits synergies within the network so that maximum value is created with minimum resources.

Quality

Since knowledge is central to GWP operations, creating and delivering that knowledge amounts largely to a quality management approach.

Knowledge is strategic

One of GWP's three strategic goals is to "Generate and communicate knowledge." This goal focuses on developing capacity to share knowledge and to promote a dynamic communications culture, so as to support better water management. That knowledge can exist anywhere: with Partners, strategic allies, in Regional and Country Water Partnerships, among staff, the GWP Technical Committee, programme managers, donors, regional technical groupings, etc.

The challenge is to capture relevant knowledge and communicate it on time to relevant audiences. GWP does that in the context of its overall strategic framework: GWP's main outcomes lie in governance improvements introduced by actors at all levels. These governance outcomes occur in 'change areas' which cover the water governance spectrum that helps bring the vision of a water secure world closer to reality.

GWP has developed a comprehensive classification of these 'change areas' as reflected in GWP's Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) ToolBox:

A. The enabling environment (policies, legal frameworks)
B. The institutional arrangements; and
C. The management instruments for sharing data/information, assessing, planning, negotiating, cooperating, regulating, and financing.

The four questions

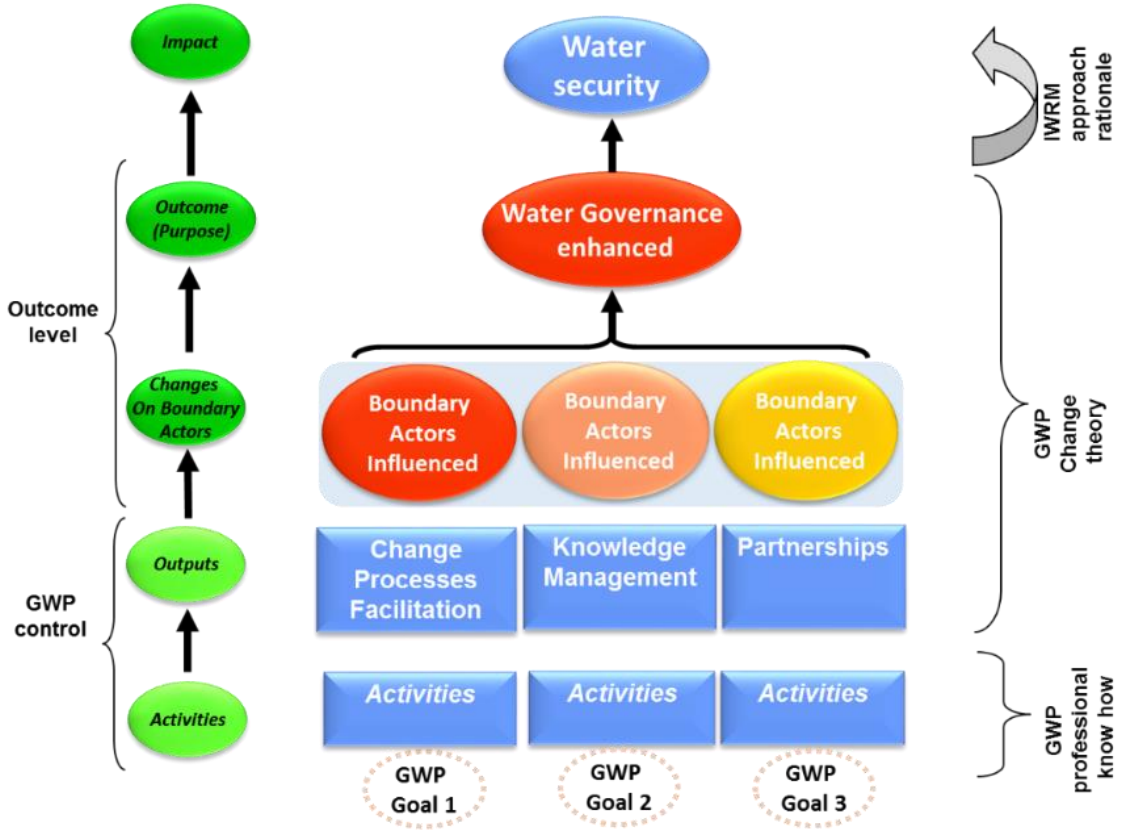
Therefore, in determining what knowledge needs to be captured and communicated, the following questions seem pertinent:

1. What governance outcomes (policy process or agenda or institution or individual or group) are we trying to influence/change? (Strategic Goal #1)
2. How does the network need to be strengthened to achieve #1 above? (Strategic Goal #3)
3. Who must we partner with to achieve #1?
4. What knowledge is needed (from any entity) to achieve #1? (Strategic Goal #2)

These questions are asked in the context of GWP's results framework. Activities and outputs carried out – facilitation processes, knowledge, and partnership development – lead to governance changes which result in increased investments and subsequent socio-economic improvements in people's lives (impact), see diagram below.

Starting with solid answers to the four questions will go a long way to developing 'influencing strategies' that deliver the relevant knowledge needed by the targeted audiences. Moreover, such an approach should improve the content of the IWRM ToolBox, giving practitioners and policy makers better knowledge about how to achieve water governance outcomes.

GWP Results Framework



The three main players

While the technical function is the responsibility of the entire network, there are three indispensable players. These players do not have to work together at all times on all knowledge activities. But a vast amount of knowledge that is produced often involves all three entities. When that is required, it is essential that clear roles are agreed. None works in isolation from the other. The players are:

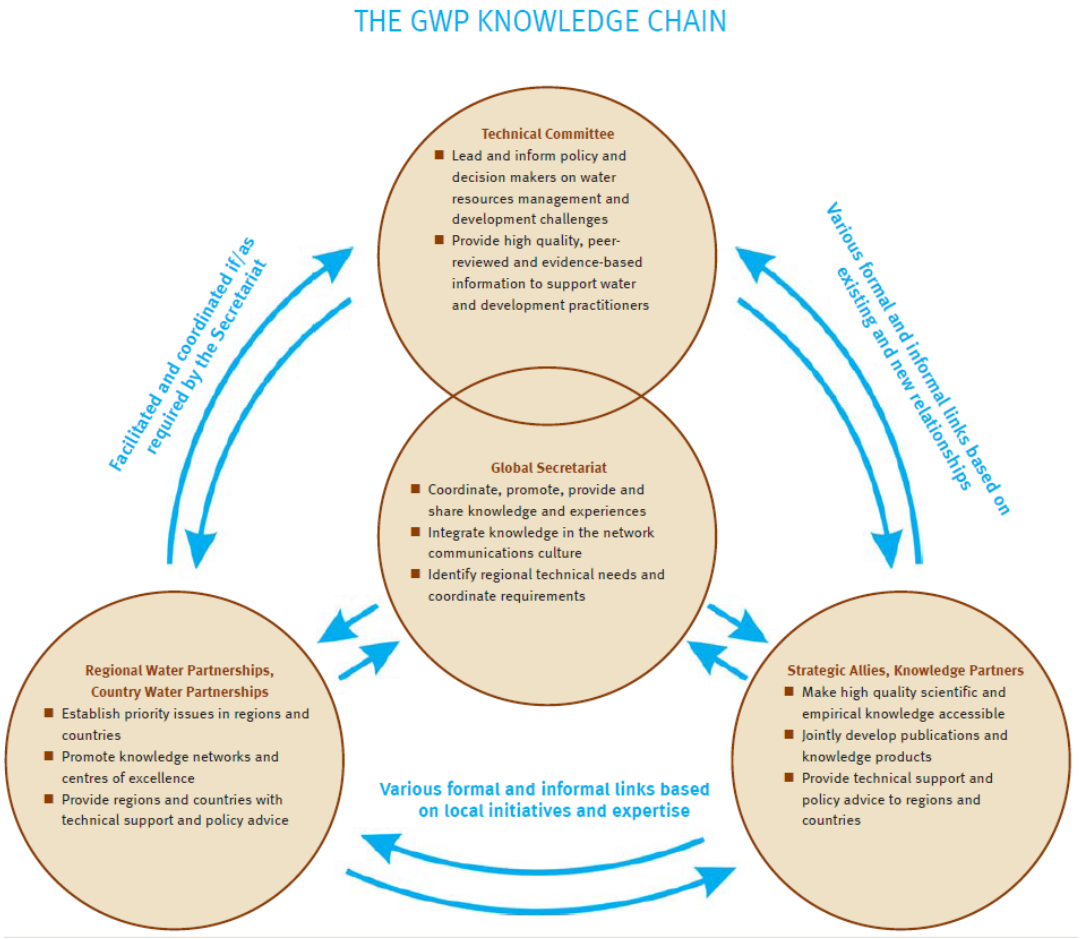
1. Regional Water Partnerships (RWPs) – which include GWP Partners, programme managers, Regional Steering Committee members, reference groups, country experts, etc.
2. global Technical Committee (TEC)
3. global Secretariat – its Units, Senior Advisors, and consultants

The roles and relationship of these entities are called the 'Knowledge Chain' (see diagram below). Their roles are summarized as follows:

- the Regional Water Partnerships – where knowledge needs are identified because the bulk of GWP's work programme is country and region based.
- the global Technical Committee – where knowledge needs are identified relevant to the global agenda
- the global secretariat – where links are facilitated between the various entities involved in knowledge production and dissemination as well as monitoring use and benefit.

The three players need to understand the answers to the 'Four Questions' listed above. Only then can they work together as 'one GWP.'

One group in the diagram is called 'Strategic Allies, Knowledge Partners': they are organisations with whom GWP carries out joint activities and should be selected based on the answer to question 3 of the four questions. More about them later in this paper.



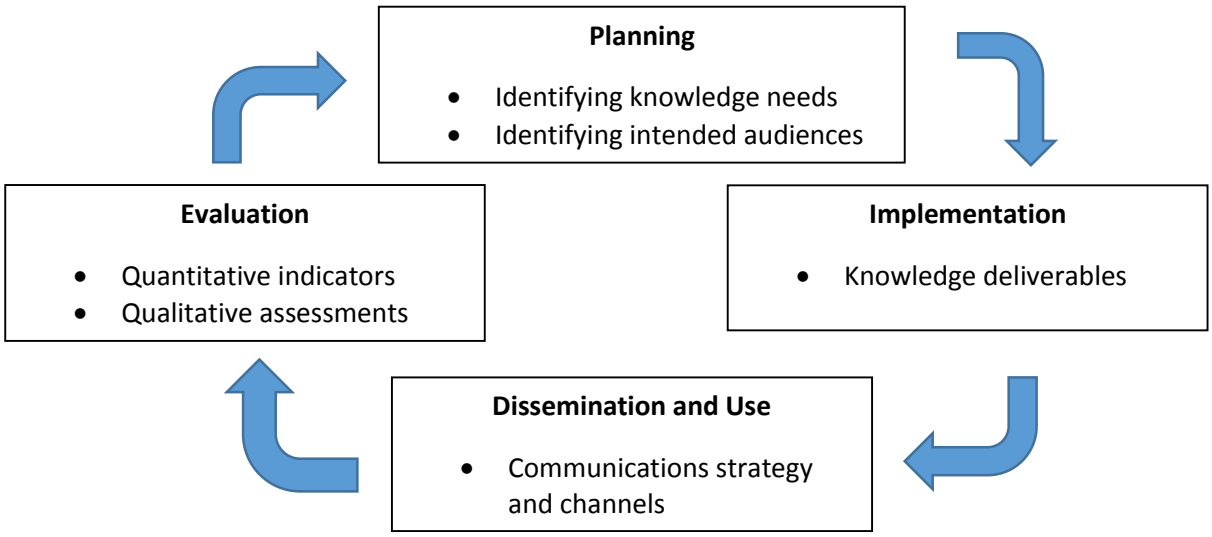
The process

As noted in GWP's *Work Programme Management Manual*, GWP follows a classic management cycle of planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Each entity of the GWP system contributes to implementing the GWP Work Programme (and, ultimately, the GWP strategy) by undertaking activities at global, regional, national and/or local level.

> *It is this management cycle that provides the ideal place for an explicit, integrated knowledge agenda-setting process and quality control within the operations of the GWP Network*.

No single diagram can fully describe GWP's Knowledge Management Approach. The best that can be hoped for is that the main elements of the process are captured. The KMA diagram below is an attempt to illustrate GWP's approach to doing KM.

Knowledge Management Approach



Planning

The planning stage is the starting point of **identifying knowledge needs**. Again, it is back to the 'four questions' listed above. It is possible that a knowledge gap is identified first and then a programme built around bridging that gap, but it is more usual for it to be the other way around, that is, a real-world problem needs to be solved and the missing knowledge to help solve it has to be identified. Or, something has to change or be influenced (a process, institution, policy, etc.) and knowledge has to be brought to bear to contribute to the governance outcome desired.

Closely connected to identifying knowledge needs is **identifying the intended audience(s)**. Identifying audiences at this first stage is essential – and refining them as necessary during programme implementation – if the knowledge developed will be used for their benefit.

The development of strategic guidance, background material and evidence-based information related to water security provides the knowledge and justification to manage water more sustainably. Knowledge products produced by GWP are a mix of global level debate on cutting edge water management policy, such as the Technical Committee publications, generic guidance on prominent issues, such as IWRM in municipalities, and location-specific data generation such as vulnerability assessments and hydrological modelling results.

Of equal importance is GWP's work on awareness raising and facilitating better access to information on water security. To this end, publicity campaigns targeted at the general public on topics such as water efficiency and sanitary heath are initiated and media training workshops are organised.

One of the most important advantages to identifying knowledge needs during programme planning is that it will tend to be demand-driven and "bottom up."

Implemention

Knowledge is being gathered, developed, and refined throughout the implementation phase. It is being done, in most cases, by a large number of people and through a large number of activities. For example, any number of knowledge players can be involved:

• GWP Partners	• TEC members
• Regional and country experts	• Strategic allies/Knowledge partners
• Reference Group	• Consultants

And any number of capacity-building activities, such as dialogues and workshops, can contribute to the knowledge deliverables. Depending on the size and extent of the programme, a KM focal point may be necessary.

GWP's capacity development work makes use of different approaches to raise awareness and enhance knowledge among government institutions and other stakeholders on water security. One example is large scale capacity building initiatives targeted at national planners and decision makers from a range of sectors each of whom has a training plan tailored to their day-to-day tasks. Alternatively, training workshops may be organised according to a specific topic and target group, such as international water law for legislators from countries sharing a river basin. Capacity building activities may also be on a smaller scale, targeting, for example, more efficient irrigation practices among farming communities in a single catchment or rainwater harvesting in urban districts.

The end goal of implementation, when it comes to knowledge, is to complete **the knowledge deliverables**.

As implied by the four questions, the knowledge deliverables should support the governance outcomes or 'influencing strategy' of the programme.

Dissemination and use

When a programme or project comes to an end, it can be said that the role of knowledge may be just beginning. Once the deliverables have been completed, they need to be disseminated to target audiences that were identified at the planning stage. It is also likely that new audiences were identified during implementation.

The key task at this stage is to ensure the uptake of knowledge that was created and/or packaged. There are many tools that can be used:

• Publications	• Peer-to-peer learning, exchange
• Training material	• Events, forums, high-level briefing
• Webinars, ppts	• Knowledge centres, hubs
• Case studies, impact stories	• Websites, intranets, helpdesks
• Communities of practice	• South-to-south workshops

New technology provides many opportunities for learning (webinars, e-Learning, online discussion groups, etc.) which could be done in cooperation with knowledge partners (see below). In addition, with GWP's focus on youth engagement it is important that knowledge is communicated in a way that appeals to a younger generation. Building the capacity of 'water leaders' and those 'outside the water box' also have to be thought of well before knowledge products are completed.

GWP's web-based ToolBox plays a central (but not exclusive) role in the network's dissemination and use strategy. As noted above, the ToolBox provides a comprehensive classification of the governance outcomes that GWP seeks to influence. So it is important that there be a tight connection between programme implementation 'on the ground' and the 'change areas' enumerated in the ToolBox.

One key to success at this stage is to have a communications strategy and plan in place well before the knowledge products are completed.

Evaluation

To 'close the loop' on the knowledge approach, there needs to be an assessment of the knowledge component. This is the place where learning for continuous improvement takes place. Sometimes formal reviews are carried out if the programme is large enough or if it is a donor requirement. Quantifiable indicators to measure knowledge impact should be looked at if possible. At other times, more informal and less expensive ways of learning might be appropriate. For example, trying to identify if decision makers explicitly state the rationale behind a decision that can be traced to use of GWP's knowledge. It is important to demonstrate the uptake of GWP's knowledge in order to communicate GWP's added value to its Partners, including donors.

The ideal place to make provision (in budget and activities) for this last stage is at the first stage of planning.

A fuller explanation of the players and the process

The #1 finding of the PEM review is that GWP's KM system is not integrated. The process outlined above is not new, but adhering to it more intentionally should improve integration.

What follows below is a fuller – but not exhaustive – description of how key players work together. In some places, new ways of doing things are suggested.

Regional technical capacity

At regional level the majority of technical support is local and not coordinated through GWPO (the global Secretariat and the Technical Committee). This is as it should be. If the technical function is the responsibility of the entire network, it is the RWPs who are best placed to provide technical advice and support on issues of specific relevance to regional and country needs.

The Conditions of Accreditation of the RWPs include a guideline requirement that RWPs establish "a group to provide advisory and expert services" and to include adequate funds for this to be effective. The responsibility for assessing regional technical capacity rests with the Regional Chairs and Steering Committees. Regional budgets are limited and therefore use of Regional Technical Capacity need not be a formal structure in the region, but instead should serve on a task basis, with funding raised for that purpose, or specifically allocated from the regional core budget as part of the annual work plan. This model is practiced in some GWP regions (e.g., Central and South America).

Some regions have a strong pool of experts selected on the basis of their experience in the many aspects of water resources management and familiarity with the region's social, economic, and political context. Where there are strong inter-regional synergies, such as between Central and South America and among the GWP regions in Africa, regional Steering Committees and Secretariats should consider the establishment of pools of experts serving more than one region.

Another paradigm is to create cross-regional/global Reference Groups for a particular programme (as was done for the Partnership for Africa's Water Development programme and more recently with the Water, Climate and Development Programme in Africa). This paradigm allows global Technical

Committee expertise to be used alongside regional experts and the Secretariat, reducing duplication of effort and reinforcing global and inter-regional knowledge sharing and learning.

It is acknowledged that there needs to be greater information flow and cooperation between regions and the Technical Committee on activities being undertaken and problems being faced. On the one hand, regions should be able to call on support from TEC when needed and, on the other, contribute regional and country knowledge to the global agenda as required. As is often observed, 'each region is different', so the degree to which TEC and a region need stronger linkages depends on the challenges being addressed and the regional expertise available.

One concrete way forward for greater integration and cooperation is for an annual technical meeting to take place, preferably within the context of the current Regional Days meeting.

Such meetings would include global Technical Committee members and representatives of Regional Technical Capacity groupings, together with relevant staff at the global Secretariat, to:

- Review the activities, outputs, and outcomes of the overall GWP technical function
- Capture the demand for technical activity at global, regional, and country level
- Identify global, regional, and country issues that should be addressed by the technical function and the framework within which work should proceed
- Set the Technical Committee agenda for the next 12 months
- Coordinate as necessary between global and regional and country technical activities
- Review the IWRM ToolBox and other knowledge management activities
- Identify GWP Partners and strategic allies needed for knowledge and expertise
- Identify regional expertise that should be included in Technical Committee activities
- Identify Technical Committee members who should be made available to participate in or contribute to regional/country activities

Global Technical Committee

In light of the PEM review, a broad consultation (with Financing Partners, Steering Committee, and regions) has taken place to examine the role of the Technical Committee in the Network.

TEC will continue to 'bridge knowledge and action' or 'science and policy' by providing clear insights to decision makers and practicioners on water resources issues. This has often been done through high quality, peer reviewed, and evidence-based publications. It is also done through direct participation by technical experts in activities such as advocacy, facilitation, and capacity-building. TEC's focus is on global issues informed by real-life challenges at the local level.

TEC's annual work plan is based on the strategic priority areas identified in GWP's strategy and based on a demand-driven agenda developed jointly with the regions and the global Secretariat. TEC is intellectually independent when it comes to the *content* of its advice and products.

As noted under 'Regional Technical Capacity', TEC supports (but is not directly responsible for) the provision of technical and policy advice on issues of relevance to regional and country needs. The annual planning meeting is the place where global-regional-country synergies should be identified. It could be that at such a meeting it is agreed that certain publications are needed by the Network. If so, TEC plays the role of an editorial board and, together with the global secretariat and region(s), commissions papers on the topics identified. TEC has a quality control role, ensuring that the appropriate author(s) – not necessarily TEC members – are selected. The global Secretariat manages contracts and the publishing process.

It could also be that at the annual planning meeting a policy process is identified (most likely linked to a publication, but not necessarily) that is global or inter-regional in nature and which requires an 'influencing strategy.' TEC members and/or regional and country experts would be identified to be deployed as necessary to influence the relevant actors who determine the policy agenda that needs influencing or changing.

GWP has always recognized the importance of working with other organizations, variously called strategic allies, knowledge partners, or GWP Partners. TEC should include members from knowledge partners in order to ensure broader ownership of – and a louder voice for – water resources management as it relates to the development agenda. (See 'Knowledge partners' below).

The above *modus operandi* would transition TEC from being almost exclusively publications driven to more of a 'task force', deploying its expertise to support 'influencing strategies' (global, regional, national) that target 'change areas' identified at annual planning meetings.

Knowledge partners

With the evolving institutional architecture of water-related organisations, it has been said that the 'winner' will be the organisation that collaborates best with other organisations. GWP has long recognized that collaboration with knowledge partners holds benefits in three key areas listed below. If partners are chosen with capacity in one or more of these areas, the result strengthens the knowledge outputs, the GWP Network, and avoids duplication of effort.

Identification of emerging challenges – GWP could benefit from an exercise with partners in identifying emerging challenges, helping to keep it at the forefront of current thinking. By linking with the research activities of organisations focused on future water-related issues, GWP will be able to assess the implications of newly-identified threats and to start responding to them.

Development of knowledge products – TEC members are selected based on their competencies in a range of areas. Nevertheless, given that areas of specialisation in water-related challenges are vast, it is critical to engage with other partners to expand GWP's knowledge base. There are agencies with competences in areas such as empirical studies, large-scale surveys, modelling, and scenario-driven activities. Linking these resources with GWP's focus on 'bridging science and policy' is a natural fit.

Dissemination and uptake of knowledge – The ultimate value of knowledge depends on the degree to which it promotes better water management outcomes. The production of knowledge is linked with dissemination, requiring consideration of the target audience, messages, and desired outcome (see 'The process' above). One area where GWP needs to improve is reaching out beyond the water sector. A formal relationship with 'outside the water sector' agencies will help GWP reach new audiences. In addition, the running of training courses or other capacity building initiatives could serve as an effective dissemination avenue for knowledge products.

The first step is to identify organisations which can make strategic contributions to GWP's work programme. The danger is to pursue too many: the engagement of knowledge partners should be driven by *a clear understanding of the needs of GWP* (again, back to the 'four questions', specifically question #3).

The other step is to clearly define the nature of the collaboration. For example, it may be that a knowledge partner is invited to be on TEC. Another is to invite potential partners to the annual planning meeting for specific input on particular issues. Also, TEC could call a special meeting related to one or more of the challenges to be addressed and invite agencies identified with those topics to attend. Each organisation would be expected to cover their staff time.

GWPO Secretariat

The global Secretariat provides the operational link between TEC and the regions. At the fulcrum of this relationship is the Network Officer who plays a coordination role among the Secretariat, the Technical Committee, the region, and the thematic area for which the Network Officer is responsible. The Secretariat also provides support services – administrative and financial management – to the Technical Committee Chair.

In addition, the Secretariat has a critical role to play in communication and knowledge management in the Network. The Communications and KM Unit manages the publishing process of global knowledge products, develops the communications plans for those products, and ensures the content quality of the IWRM ToolBox.

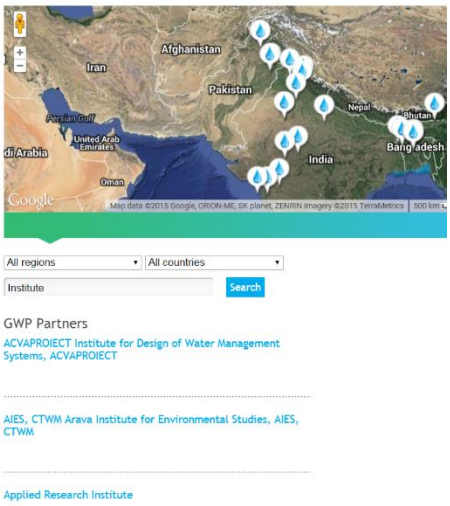
TEC's work programme is developed together with the Executive Secretary (ES), who contributes based on Network priorities and needs (determined primarily through the annual planning meeting). The ES and the TEC Chair are both accountable for the product choices of TEC. The ES participates in TEC meetings in order to strengthen the Secretariat's facilitation of the work of TEC. The Head of Network Operations and the Head of Communications attend TEC meetings when economically feasible. The Senior Knowledge Management Officer attends TEC meetings as the Secretariat's technical liaison to the Committee, assisting with budget and work plan preparation, taking Minutes, and ensuring linkages between the Committee's work and GWP's knowledge database, the ToolBox.

Annex: Engaging GWP Partners across the network

Listserv

Through a moderated listserv, any Partner can post their questions, services, etc.

GWP Partner Search



Partner Search Online

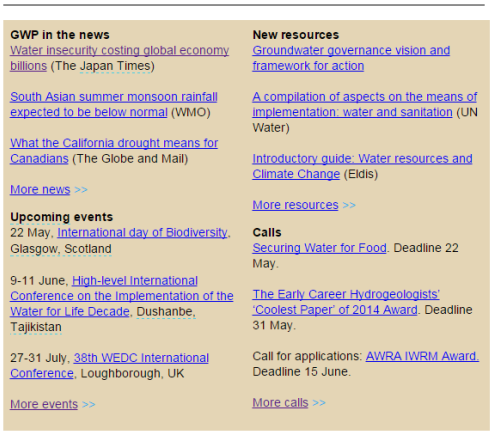
Partners can find each other on the GWP "Partners Search" page on the website.

Regional Collaboration Spaces

Some regions have collaborative spaces for knowledge sharing.

Newsletter and Social Media

Partners can have their events and calls posted on the GWP website by request, or annouced in our monthly e-newsletter, *NewsFlow*, or uploaded to social media.



GWP in the news
Water insecurity costing global economy billions (The Japan Times)

South Asian summer monsoon rainfall expected to be below normal (WMO)

What the California drought means for Canadians (The Globe and Mail)

More news >>

Upcoming events
22 May, International day of Biodiversity, Glasgow, Scotland

9-11 June, High-level International Conference on the Implementation of the Water for Life Decade, Dushanbe, Tajikistan

27-31 July, 38th WEDC International Conference, Loughborough, UK

More events >>

New resources
Groundwater governance vision and framework for action

A compilation of aspects on the means of implementation: water and sanitation (UN Water)

Introductory guide: Water resources and Climate Change (Eldis)

More resources >>

Calls
Securing Water for Food. Deadline 22 May.

The Early Career Hydrogeologists' 'Coolest Paper' of 2014 Award. Deadline 31 May.

Call for applications: AWRA IWRM Award. Deadline 15 June.

More calls >>

Filter list
Select year | Select month | Apply

These are some of the water related events GWP participates in.

GWP Welcomes Partners to Virtual Network Meeting
01 Jun 2015 - 01 Jun 2015
Global Water Partnership (GWP) invites all Partners to its annual GWP Network Meeting on 1 June 2015. This year's meeting will be held online - www.gwp.org -...

Interactive workshop - South Asia Drought Monitoring System, 20 April 2015, Dhaka, Bangladesh

More Water Related Events
9-11 June 2015, High-level International Conference on the Implementation of the Water for Life Decade, Dushanbe, Tajikistan

Upcoming events at the Centre for Water Law, Policy and Science (University of Dundee)

27-31 July 2015, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Services Beyond 2015: Improving access and sustainability, Loughborough, UK

21-23 Sept 2015, The 18th International Riversymposium, Brisbane, Australia

4 -9 Oct 2015, Water Innovation Lab Europe, Perthshire, Scotland

5-30 October, 2015, E-learning course: ...uction to renewable energy desalination"

...applications: Water Resources Management ...mmes (McGill University)

...nominations: The Early Career ...eologists' 'Coolest Paper' of 2014 Award. ...e 31 May 2015.

...applications: AWRA IWRM Award. Deadline ...e 2015.

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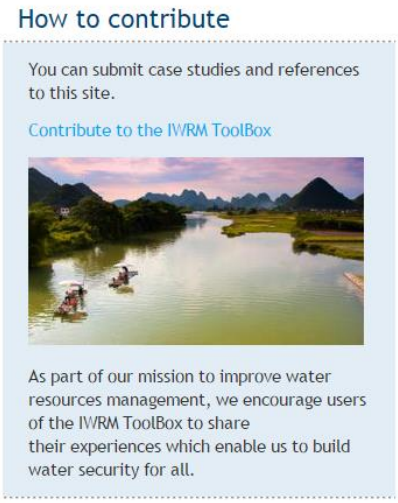
GWP IWRM ToolBox

GWP's ToolBox gives users the opportunity to contribute.



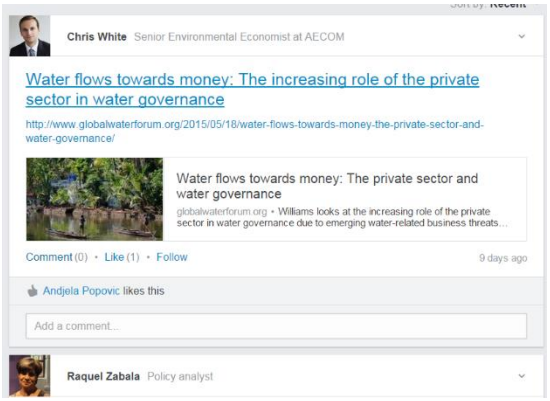
How to contribute

You can submit case studies and references to this site.

Contribute to the IWRM ToolBox

As part of our mission to improve water resources management, we encourage users of the IWRM ToolBox to share their experiences which enable us to build water security for all.

Professional LinkedIn Group



Chris White Senior Environmental Economist at AECOM

Water flows towards money: The increasing role of the private sector in water governance

http://www.globalwaterforum.org/2015/05/18/water-flows-towards-money-the-private-sector-and-water-governance/

Water flows towards money: The private sector and water governance
globalwaterforum.org • Williams looks at the increasing role of the private sector in water governance due to emerging water-related business threats...

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