

Water gets a high profile in international relations

TWELVE RECOMMENDATIONS CALL FOR A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO WATER.



Recommendations and presentations from the conference "Water in International Relations", organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia and the Environmental Academic Network on the occasion of World Wetland Day 2010 on 3 February were presented in December 2010.

Ms. Martina Zupan from GWP Slovenia delivered a presentation about Global Water Partnership on the global, regional and local levels. "Twelve recommendations call for an integrated approach to the management of water resources, along the Dublin-Rio principles, advocated by GWP for nearly 15 years," she said. Among others, they articulate a prominent role of water governance, technological development, communication and education. The recommendations were delivered to the Slovenian Minister of Foreign Affairs for the development of proposals on the international level.

Twelve recommendations

1. Water is a key element of economic and social development, human security and the preservation of natural ecosystems.
2. Population growth, urbanisation, economic development and pollution exacerbate water stress. Climate change is having a most visible impact on the water cycle.
3. Water governance requires a global approach, while promoting specific local solutions and taking into account existing local knowledge.
4. Water governance is based on co-operation at all decision-making levels, including local communities and individuals.
5. Water governance requires a cross-sectoral approach, especially with regard to the sustainable management of aquatic ecosystems.
6. A debate must be encouraged on the ethics of the human impact on the water cycle. Health and human security depend on the preservation and survival of aquatic ecosystems.
7. Water governance includes the development of technologies for the more efficient use and reuse of water and a reduction of human influence on the water cycle.
8. Water is a social value. Water governance is based on social responsibility and the active involvement of individuals. Access to drinking water must also be addressed in the context of human rights.



Recommendations call for access to drinking water a human right.

Calendar of Events

*World Water Day
Water for Cities: Responding to the Urban Challenges*
22 March 2011

Baltic/Danube Strategy Workshop
5 April 2011
Budapest, Hungary

GWP CEE Regional Council
6-7 April 2011
Budapest, Hungary

Global Water Summit 2011
18-19 April 2011
Berlin, Germany

Danube Day
29 June 2011
Danube River Basin

World Water Week in Stockholm
21-27 August 2011
Stockholm, Sweden

9. Water governance requires open and transparent communication concerning water in a language that is comprehensible to all. Traditional knowledge of water must be merged with new scientific findings.

10. Water is a public good and a factor of social integration as well as co-operation. It is a common heritage of people and therefore must not be subject to private or corporate interests. It encourages the awareness of interdependence; it is important in conflict prevention and the promotion of post-conflict reconstruction.

11. The participation of women in decision-making processes is of crucial importance in water governance. Women's experience in water provision for households, cooking and hygiene maintenance is invaluable for efficient water governance; restricted access to water is one of the major reasons for the reduced participation of girls and women in education.

12. Education is of great importance in the provision of access to safe drinking water, protection of ecosystems and the reduction of human impact on the water cycle. ■

For more information, contact Ms. Martina Zupan, GWP Slovenija at: martina.zupan@siol.net

Report Urges a Better Way to do Development

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT REQUIRES MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS.

The report, *Water Security for Development: Insights from African Partnerships in Action*, outlines the lessons of a five-year program to develop Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) plans in 13 African countries. It was launched at a High-Level Ministerial Session at World Water Week on 8 September 2010 on Africa Focus Day. GWP Executive Secretary handed over the report to AMCOW President Hon. Buyelwa P. Sonjica who acknowledged the contribution of Global Water Partnership to the process of improving water management in Africa.

"Water, which is central to development, food security and crucial for meeting the MDGs must be managed better. Stakeholder partnerships are foundational to advancing water security, confronting global challenges such as climate change, and accelerating progress towards internationally agreed goals such as the MDGs," Grobicki said.

"While results differed in each country, in all of them progress was made in highlighting the importance at policy level of the contribution of water resources management to the development agenda," said Grobicki. "The GWP program gave rise to a multitude of lessons not just relevant to the water sector, but to all social change processes driving sustainable development for the benefit of people and their communities."

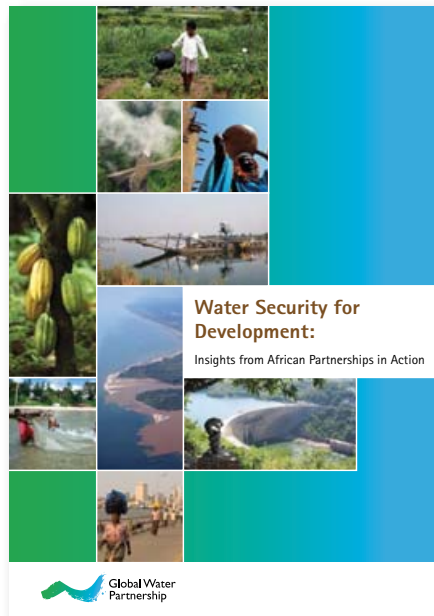
Working in a partnership

The lessons learned center around the importance of understanding the development context, having a strategic road map, ensuring sustainability and developing capacity. In addition, the report provides policy recommendations for decision-makers that, if applied, could not only strengthen water management but also improve national development processes.

It's not just what you do," said Alex Simalabwi, the report's lead author, "it's also how you do it. Too many development initiatives are handed down from above by donors or governments with no buy-in from local communities. It shouldn't be top-down or bottom-up, it should be an equal partnership with multiple stakeholders who all have an interest in negotiating a win-win outcome." "The tighter the integration of water management planning with other development activities, the better the outcome," noted Simalabwi. "Water is connected to every-



GWP Executive Secretary Dr Ania Grobicki and Hon Buyelwa P. Sonjica, AMCOW President and Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs in South Africa.



thing—food, energy, health, industry—it is the world's lifeline. So how it is managed in relation to competing uses is what policy-makers have to fix their minds on."

Policy recommendations

Six policy recommendations are highlighted in the report. Integrated approaches to water management and other development interventions should:

1. Be undertaken as part of the broader national development planning process. Cross-sectoral coordination and responsibility for integration should be anchored in a government institution with capacity to influence and mobilise other

sectors. Higher-level government bodies such as ministries of finance and economic planning, the cabinet and the prime minister's or vice president's office are good locations for facilitating integration.

2. Be aligned with high-priority national development processes with broad cross-sectoral and stakeholder support, even if these are outside the water sector.

3. Be flexible, realistic and structured as a continuous processes rather than individual projects.

4. Take into account country differences and accommodate variations of scope and budget, based on the country's development context.

5. Embed water-related climate change adaptation into water resources management plans and not treat climate change as a separate issue, in order to avoid duplication and fragmentation. The capacity of local institutions must be built to address climate change adaptation as part of the water security agenda in development planning and decision-making processes, in line with national development priorities.

6. Develop economic arguments for financing water resources management. Opportunities for accessing adaptation funds for financing water resources management must be explored. ■

The report "*Water Security for Development*" is available at www.gwp.org

Integration is a key

GWP CEE HAS CALLED FOR POLICY CHANGES IN LIGHT OF HEAVY FLOODS.

After heavy rainfall in May, the countries of Central Europe face dramatic floods. In Slovakia, rainfall in May was the heaviest in history since records began to be collected in 1881 in a small town of Hurbanovo. In Slovakia alone, floods left hundreds of people homeless and were the cause of three deaths and damage exceeding 730 million €. They also took a heavy toll on human lives and property in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Ukraine.

Policy changes towards integrated water and landscape management can prevent floods and save costs of rescue operations and restoration efforts. Integrated water resources management calls for the coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources in order to maximize the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems.

"In addition to structural measures such as dikes, large dams and dry polders, agriculture, forest and urbanization policies and practices must be changed to capture water in the countryside," says Milan Matuska, GWP CEE Regional Coordinator. It includes but is not limited to the prevention of forest clear cuts, the building of small dams on water streams, ponds, rainwater harvesting and storing water in the landscape. He went on to say, "We believe that a balance of policy options including a mix of structural and soft flood protection measures is the right answer not only to flood risks but also to other extreme events inflicted by climate changes such as drought."

Since land use planning and construction permitting is largely in the hands of local municipalities, they have to use them wisely to prevent construction in flood zones; this is quite a sensitive issue. To help towns and villages in decision making, flood maps in the appropriate scales are sorely needed. Financing flood prevention measures is another issue for under budgeted local municipalities which are stricken by the financial crisis and decreased tax revenues, their major cash source. Yet another problem is related to property and water rights in some towns and villages, where the state administers water

streams and neighboring areas, making local action difficult, if not impossible.

Integrated weather forecasting and a flood warning system should also be developed in order to provide time to respond, especially during extreme events, such as flash floods which are common in the mountainous regions of Central Europe and which rapidly inundate low-lying areas. ■

For more information, please contact GWP CEE Regional Secretariat at: gwpcce@shmu.sk



CREDIT: RICHARD MULLER/GWP CEE

Water reservoirs provide flood protection and supply water for irrigation, recreation and other uses.

Ukraine Environmental Strategy includes IWRM

IN DECEMBER 2010, THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY OF THE UKRAINE WAS ADOPTED BY THE UKRAINIAN PARLIAMENT AND CONTAINS A COMPONENT ON WATER MANAGEMENT.

In 2009, Ukraine decided to revise its main water planning document in accordance with European Union laws and the EU's Water Framework Directive even though the country is not a member of the EU. The result, known as the National Targeted Program for Water Management Development, defined a strategy for developing Ukraine's

water management system. GWP Ukraine led an assessment of this document and



noted that, among other things, the program lacked an integrated approach. Results were

presented at public hearings and submitted to the authorities and the National Targeted Program was not approved. Following the assessment, GWP Ukraine, working with other NGOs, pushed for the inclusion of an Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) approach and the strategy now calls for "reform of the state management of the water sector by implementing IWRM on the basin level." ■

Read the ToolBox case study www.gwptoolbox.org/index.php?option=com_case&id=270&Itemid=47

GWP Chair statement at COP 16

CLIMATE CHANGE IS ABOUT WATER, BUT MISSING FROM AGENDA

The world's economic growth and social welfare depend on the sustainable management of the world's water resources in the context of climate change, according to a statement issued by the Global Water Partnership (GWP). The statement was delivered by GWP Chair Dr. Letita A. Obeng to the high level session of the world climate change conference on Friday, December 10, 2010.

"When world leaders speak about climate, they invariably speak of water – of floods, droughts and failed harvests – and express their alarm. They are right to do so: because climate change is primarily about water," the statement says.

The statement calls on the 193 countries that participate in the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to make sustainable water resources management and disaster risk management an integral part of the global response to climate change.

The statement responds to the objections by climate negotiators that sectoral issues complicate negotiations by arguing that water resources management is not a sector, but a "cross-cutting concern for the achievement



CREDIT: GWP

GWP Chair Dr. Letita A. Obeng at COP 16 in Cancun, Mexico.

of mitigation objectives around forestry, agriculture, and energy, many of which rely on [water's] availability."

The statement continues, "The water supply and sanitation sector, agriculture or any other sector should not be singled out for sectoral dis-

cussion. But the world's water resources and their management should be singled out because the potential impact of climate change on society will, in many cases, be transmitted through the medium of water."

"Failure to recognize the role of sustainable water management in adapting to climate change could prove disastrous to people's livelihoods and economic development," said Dr. Obeng in comments delivered earlier in the week.

The GWP statement outlines the potential consequences of inaction including insufficient water to support economic growth and the world's food supply. "GWP's delegation came to Cancun to highlight the seamless link among water resources management, climate change, and sustainable development," said Dr. Obeng, noting that GWP's statement reflected the views of similar agencies.

GWP is a network of more than 2,300 partner organizations, works in nearly 80 countries, and has observer status to the UNFCCC as an inter-governmental organization.

"We have to remember that the ones most vulnerable to the impact of climate change are those in lower income countries, indigenous groups, and those in extreme poverty," said Dr. Obeng. "World leaders need to understand that investments in sustainable water resources management will deliver important benefits to vulnerable populations today, while strengthening resilience to longer-term climate risks." ■



CREDIT: GWP / IWRM

IWRM bridges water resources management, climate change and sustainable development.

More information about GWP participation in COP 16 www.gwp.org

Drought Programme under Preparation

GWP, TOGETHER WITH THE WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION (WMO) ORGANISED A CONSULTATION MEETING ON THE PROPOSED INTEGRATED DROUGHT MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, 15-16 NOVEMBER 2010.

The aim of the Programme is to alleviate poverty in drought-affected regions of the world through an integrated approach to drought management, cutting across sectoral, disciplinary, and institutional jurisdictions. The Programme intends to provide policy and management guidance through the globally coordinated generation of scientific information, sharing knowledge and best practices for drought risk management.

As stated by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fourth Assessment Report (IPCC, 2007), the world has become more drought-prone during the past 25 years and projections for the 21st century show clear increase frequency in drought events. The overarching approach proposed for the Programme centres around four key principles (1) shift the focus from reactive to proactive measures, (2) integrate vertical planning and decision making processes at regional, national and community levels, (3) promote the evolution of a consistent knowledge base and sharing and (4) build capacity of various stakeholders, and support drought management efforts.



CREDIT: RICHARD MULLER / GWP CEE

Droughts in CEE have serious economic, social and environmental consequences.

GWP Executive Secretary Dr. Ania Grobicki attended the consultation together with other GWP regional representatives including Prof. Janusz Kindler, GWP CEE Senior Advisor. All together 36 representatives of the European Commission, FAO, the Secretariat of the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, Red Cross, ICID, WaterAid-UK, the UN Convention to Combat Deserti-

fication, UNESCO, US Department of Agriculture, US National Drought Mitigation Center, WMO and GWP took part in the meeting. ■

For more information about GWP CEE involvement in the Drought Programme, please contact GWP CEE Regional Secretariat, e-mail: gwpcee@shmu.sk.

GWP Slovakia facilitates local initiatives

MORE THAN 100 INHABITANTS AND VISITORS OF PLAVECKY MIKULAS WILL BENEFIT FROM RESTORATION OF DRINKING WATER SPRING.

Citizens, mainly older residents living in the Mokra Valley section of the village of Plavecky Mikulas, suffer from a lack of drinking water during the dry summer period. The spring has another important function; it fills a small reservoir to be used by firefighters and rescue services during fire emergencies. The village with a population of over 700 people is located in the northwest part of the country, approximately 60 kilometers from the capital city of Bratislava.

To solve the problem, the Plavecky Mikulas Citizens Initiative came up with an idea and GWP Slovakia drafted a project proposal that was submitted to Holcim Slovakia in summer 2010. The project proposal, ranked the best by the donor, received a small grant in August. The project will be finished in June 2011.

"The local Municipal Council welcomes the initiative and supports it in-kind with a contribution of construction material," says Ms. Maria Jeklova, the Mayor of Plavecky Mikulas. She added, "We are committed to helping citizens at every step of the project implementation."

The project was financially supported by Holcim Slovakia. The municipality of Plavecky Mikulas, citizens and GWP Slovakia made in-kind contribu-

tions. During implementation, GWP Slovakia will coordinate experts working on the design of the drinking water spring and the modification of the surrounding area, including a small water reservoir for firefighters. The restored spring will be open to visitors of the village which is a favorite tourist site at the foot of the Small Carpathian Mountains. ■



CREDIT: MILAN MATUSKA/GWP CEE

A small reservoir for fire fighters.

Serbia Wins Danube Art Master

TWO SERBIAN CHILDREN WON THE INTERNATIONAL DANUBE ART MASTER 2010 COMPETITION, THE ICPDR ANNOUNCED ON 24 SEPTEMBER.

The International Master is selected from the winners of the national 'Danube Art Master' competitions in 14 Danube Basin countries including Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine. More than 4000 children from these 14 countries entered the competition.

The winning submission was created by two Serbian school girls, Martina Stanojevic and Martina Mihajlovic. Their artistic sculpture, entitled "Recycle - Save the Danube" is creatively made from waste materials, including local natural materials, and represents an appeal to "get active for the rivers".

"This competition is a key element of the annual Danube Day celebration and transcends national borders, emphasizing the complexity of the Danube and its connections to land, animals, forests and people," said Philip Weller, Executive Secretary of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR).

Children were encouraged to visit local rivers and surrounding areas and to consider what



the environment means to them. They were then asked to reflect their thoughts and inspirations through environmental art using materials from in and around the river.

The competition was jointly organized by the ICPDR, the national administrations and the Danube Environmental Forum (DEF), the largest



Winning art "Recycle - Save the Danube".



National winners with Philip Weller (ICPDR) and Uli Gehmacher (CocaCola) at award ceremony in Vienna.

network of environmental NGOs in the Danube Basin. In Serbia the competition was organized by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management.

"We believe that this competition encourages children to learn more about the Danube and help protect it," said ICPDR Executive Secretary Philip Weller. "It is also an artistic reminder for

adults and the representatives of Danube national governments of their joint responsibility to ensure that the Danube is protected for future generations."

The award ceremony in Vienna was attended by the national Danube Art Master winners (and their accompanying persons). After the ceremony, the winners joined a three-day environ-

mental programme, supported by Coca-Cola and organized by the Global Water Partnership Hungary, which includes trips around Vienna, the Schonbrunn Palace and Zoo and the Sea World Museum. ■

*For further information, please contact:
Philip Weller, ICPDR Secretariat,
email: philip.weller@unvienna.org*

GWP Lithuania calls for information campaigns

THE IMPORTANCE OF RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND PROGRAMMES OF MEASURES NEEDS TO BE CLEARLY COMMUNICATED.



Lithuania Water Partnership

In October 2010, GWP Lithuania together with the Environmental Protection Agency organized a series of seminars where river basin management plans and programs of measures including the IWRM concept were presented to the public. The first took place in the municipality of Ignalina on 25 October with the aim to present the Daugava River Basin District Management Plan and programme of measures. On 26 October, Bernardas Paukstys, Chair of GWP Lithuania, presented the river basin management plans and IWRM concept at the meeting of the Academy of Sciences. This meeting resulted in a lively and open discussion about the possibilities for improving programmes of measures which are a key part of river basin management plans. The next meetings were held on 27 October in the municipality of Telsiai to discuss the Venta River Basin District Management Plan and programme of measures and on 28 October in the municipality of Pasvalys to consult the Lielupe River Basin District Management Plan and programme of measures.

Communication gap

"Despite the virtual public hearings and a few information seminars, quite a large part of society remains unaware of the management plans and programmes of measures for their river basins," says Bernardas Paukstys, GWP Lithuania Chair. "People are interested in learning more and therefore information campaigns need to be continued." GWP Lithuania - an information centre for the implementation of the river basin management plans - will do this work together with other national NGOs.

In 2007, GWP Lithuania was invited by the Min-

istry of Environment to become one of national information centres for river basin management planning. Although the issue might be seen as too technical and complicated, the plan and its measures will drive development around rivers, streams or lakes for many years to come. This may include the construction of waste water treatment plants and collection systems, a small

hydropower plant or starting environmentally friendly farming. So, if you want to know what is going to happen around your favorite river, please check the plan and programme of measures for your respective sub-basin. ■

For more information, contact Dr. Bernardas Paukstys, GWP Lithuania at: bernardas@iti.lt



Neris River in winter.

CREDIT: BERNARDAS PAUKSTYS



Annual canoeing competition in the Neris River.

CREDIT: BERNARDAS PAUKSTYS

New Chair for GWP CEE



ON 19 OCTOBER 2010, MARTINA ZUPAN WAS APPOINTED AS THE NEW CHAIR OF THE GLOBAL WATER PARTNERSHIP OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE (GWP CEE)

Ms. Zupan, a Slovenian senior scientist, holding a degree in chemistry from the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Technology at the University of Ljubljana, has extensive experience in water management, sustainable development, public participation, ecology and water quality moni-

toring and assessment. She has held increasingly responsible positions since joining the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning in 1970, most recently as Head of the Water Quality Department at the Hydrometeorological Institute and Chancellor to the Government at the Environmental Agency of the Republic of Slovenia.

In accepting the position of GWP CEE Chair, Martina Zupan said, "During the development of river basin management plans, integrated water resources management has been recognized as the most efficient way of adapting to climate change.

Thus climate change and variability, floods, landslides, droughts and adaptation to new realities should be among the priorities of the Regional Water Partnership in the future."

Ms. Zupan will assume her duties as Chair of the GWP CEE at the end of 2010. Until then, she will work with the current Chair, Mr. Liviu Nicolae Popescu, who will remain with the Regional Water Partnership as Senior Advisor and Council member. ■

For more information, please contact GWP CEE Regional Secretariat at: gwpcee@shmu.sk

GWP Romania at Bucharest Business Forum

DEVELOPMENT OF FLAGSHIP PROJECTS FOR EUROPEAN UNION STRATEGY FOR DANUBE REGION.

The goal of the meeting held at the World Trade Center in Bucharest, Romania on 18-19 October 2010 was to offer a discussion platform for all stakeholders interested in developing flagship projects within the EU Strategy for the Danube Region through Strategic Partnerships at the European macro regional level.



It was mentioned that all three pillars: socio-economic issues, the environment and connectivity are equally important within the Danube Strategy. In order to make the Danube Strategy workable and affordable, all main obstacles need to be eliminated through the consultation and participation of interested stakeholder groups.

During the discussions in Panel A "Forest and Water" it was mentioned that in the Forest & Water Management – Vision for 2010 the theme considered and used was Innovative and Sustainable Use of Resources. GWP Romania and other NGO representatives underlined the importance of IWRM application together with land management planning, especially in addressing new challenges such as climate change and adaptation.

"This will require multiple resources, expertise and power to implement the actions and measures included in different programmes and plans," said Liviu Nicolae Popescu, GWP Romania and GWP CEE Chair.



Integrated management of water and landscape is crucial for climate change adaptation.

CREDIT: RICHARD MÜLLER / GWP CEE

The final format of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region was finally discussed on 8 November in Bucharest in the presence of European Commission President, Jose Manuel Barroso and other Commissioners. The issues and principles of IWRM were included as a distinct chapter with regard to water and ecological resources at the river basin management level, after a number of interventions that were made during the series of conferences held from January to August. In the future, the main issue will be to include these principles in projects and action plans together with financial resources. ■

For more information, contact GWP Romania at: lipopesc@gmail.com