



Latin American Capacity-building Programme on International Waters Law

↑ *Aerial view of River Plate, shared by Argentina and Uruguay.*

Source: Earth Sciences & Image Analysis Laboratory, NASA Johnson Space Center.

Why such a programme for Latin America?

About 40% of the world's population lives in international basins. 75% of the territory of **Latin America** is made up of basins shared by two or more countries.

As water security becomes more uncertain due to climate change and population growth, international conflicts over water distribution are likely to increase.

South America has 38 international river basins covering almost 60% of the continent, which is inhabited by more than 30% of the population. The discharge of these basins represents around 70% of all the freshwater flow in South America. International basins cover almost 10,570,000 km² (roughly the areas of Brazil, Bolivia and Venezuela), 92% of which are encompassed within 3 main river basins: the Amazon, the Plate,

and the Orinoco. Since only some of those 38 international basins have a consolidated institutional framework, the creation of transboundary water management agencies is most necessary.

Central America is a region of international basins. In a small territory of 524,000 km² (about the surface of Spain) there are 23 international rivers, corresponding to about 40% of the area of the region. This is a larger area than that of any given country in Central America, hence the urgency to improve transboundary governance.

Therefore, it is essential to provide tools that enable achieving a better understanding of the shared benefits and best management practices contributing to the advance of water security and an improved adaptation to climate change.

Global Water Partnership (GWP) is an international network, open to all organizations involved in water resources management, created in 1996 to foster the implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM): the coordinated development and management of water, land, and related resources in order to maximise economic and social welfare without compromising the sustainability of ecosystems and the environment. GWP's vision is for a water secure world.

GWP has about 3,000 institutional partners in more than 170 countries. GWP South America has about 300 partners in 10 countries (August 2014).



↑ *Lake Titicaca, shared by Bolivia and Peru*
Source: Lake Titicaca, shared by Bolivia and Peru.

Goals

- Promotion of national, regional and international cooperation; facilitation of good water governance through the strengthening of technical and institutional capacities of both agencies and individuals in good position to influence and advise decision makers on legal frameworks for water management.
- Supporting national governments in developing future legal frameworks that will contribute to water security, sustainable development and peace in Latin America.

The programme provides, among others:

- **2 ANNUAL TRAINING WORKSHOPS** aimed at officials in a position to influence, affect and advise on the decision making processes, or moreover, in a position to make decisions on the issue in their countries of origin.
- **1 HANDBOOK** supporting the training process.

Partners and allies

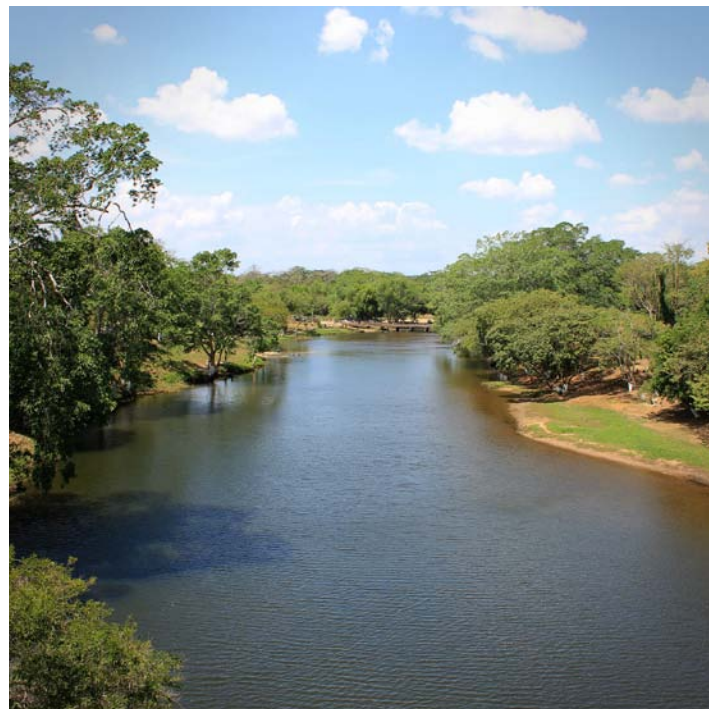
The programme is being implemented by GWP South America and GWP Central America in close coordination with the Universidad Externado de Colombia, LA-WETnet/Cap-Net, Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Perú (PUCP) and the National Water Agency (ANA-Brazil).

It has the academic endorsement of the University of Dundee (UK) and its Centre for Water Law, Policy and Science (sponsored by UNESCO).

The programme is open to organizations willing to join forces and contribute technically and/or financially.

Expected outcomes

- Improved capacity of the participants to influence public institutions responsible for administrating legal and management issues related to international watercourses.
- Strengthening of knowledge and coordination and negotiation capacity of the organizations involved in discussions and decision-making processes related to international watercourses.
- Realization by decision makers of the importance of **Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)** as a strategic approach to enhance water governance at the international level in order to ensure water security and peace in the region.
- Establishment of guidelines for mainstreaming **IWRM** approach in the plans and strategies affecting international waters.
- Establishment of an alliance of key organizations to develop synergies around **International Water Law** in Latin America.
- Fostering a change of perception of international waters from potential element of conflict towards an opportunity to cooperate and share profits.



↑ *Macal River, shared by Belize and Guatemala.*
Source: 'Macal River at San Ignacio' by Kaldari, via Wikimedia Commons.

For further information, please contact **GWP South America** Regional Secretariat: info@gwpsudamerica.org