

GWP POLICY ON PARTNERS

1. Introduction

This paper sets out the GWP Policy on Partners. It aims to clarify the concept and position of a *Partner* within the GWP. GWP has two categories of Partners, the ordinary Partners and the “Sponsoring Partners”. This policy focuses only on ordinary Partners as the role of Sponsoring Partners is covered by the statutes of the GWP Organization¹. The term “partnership” in the Global Water Partnership means the group of Partners that make up the global network. The policy brings a degree of formality whilst maintaining the basic GWP ethos of inclusiveness and flexibility.

Partners are the basis on which the GWP network is constructed and operates. Up to now, the term *Partner* has tended to be used synonymously with the term *member*. The terms may be considered interchangeable in that Partners are obliged to register as members of the Global Water Partnership². However, the term ‘**Partner**’ will be the official term in line with GWP emphasis on the partnership mode of networking and operation. This is necessary to facilitate better clarity on the concept of a GWP Partner.

The paper draws heavily from the pre-CP 2003 electronic discussion group report on Membership as well as on the outcome of the CP meeting 2003 and the SC meeting in May 2004. The policy covers the following areas:

- Definition of a GWP Partner
- GWP and Individuals or unregistered entities
- Partners and Regional, Country and sub-national Partnerships
- Formalizing the Partners within the Network
- The Benefits, Rights and Obligations of a Partner
- Building a Database on GWP Partners
- Use of the GWP Logo

2. Definition of a GWP Partner

A GWP Partner, according to the current GWPO Statutes Article 3(i) is defined as:

“Any entity, except individuals, may become a Partner of the Network. Partners of the Network may include States, national, regional and local Government Institutions, Intergovernmental Organizations, international and national Non-governmental Organizations, Academic Institutions and Research Institutions, Companies, and service providers in the public sector.”

¹ The GWP Organization is the legally constituted inter-governmental organization established in 2002.

² For example, for those languages where the term ‘partner’ does not exist the preferred translation would be member.

Further, according to Article (2) any such entity which recognizes the principles of integrated water resources management endorsed by the Network and is committed to these principles (as outlined in the application to be a Partner) may become a Partner of the Network, subject to a decision by the Executive Secretary.

Thus for the GWP, a Partner is an institution (registered with GWP) that embraces the cross sectoral range of institutions that have a bearing on the sustainable management of water resources and is committed to an integrated approach. Partners make up the multi-stakeholder group that works together towards achieving the requisite actions for sustainable water resources management at relevant levels. Such institutions can, for instance, be in the fields of agriculture, law, industry, education, environment, community water users, mining, human resource development, gender equality and so on.

It is important that ‘partnership’ in GWP is defined from the main organisation (GWP). Partnership means ‘Partner of the global network GWP’. If a Partner decides to be a partner of an RWP and/or partner of a CWP etc. that is a matter of choice, but allowing partners to refrain from registering as GWP partners means that they would not be bound by the GWP Statutes (and given corresponding rights and obligations) and that is not acceptable from GWP’s point of view as the identity “water partnership” would be used.

From the above definition of a Partner, it is clear that GWP has adopted a formal institutional definition of a Partner. However, as is elaborated in this Paper, the development of the GWP network has also up to now been based on the strong support from informal or unregistered entities and from individuals. This paper therefore, also addresses the roles of both individuals as well as of the informal unregistered entities that continue to cooperate with GWP.

The historical development of some regions, as well as the unique way that the relevant institutions in those countries are organized and operate, necessitate the need to provide a more context specific definition of who can be a GWP Partner. This is covered below.

(i) Networks

A network organization³ is considered as an institution and thus can be a Partner of GWP as long as it meets the criteria set out above; i.e. it recognizes the principles of IWRM and is committed to implement these principles. An institutional member of a network organization may also apply to be a GWP Partner in its own right if it so wishes.

(ii) National Umbrella Organizations and International Organizations

National umbrella organizations or International Organizations representing numerous entities can become partners of GWP. As the interests of the individual organizations coordinated by such bodies can be quite diverse, the individual organizations under the umbrella organization may also become Partners of GWP in their own right. Thus, the

³ This is particularly relevant to the Mediterranean regional water partnership where networks form the core partners.

decision on whether organizations in this category wish to apply to become a Partner of GWP rests with the organizations that are in this situation.

Similarly the country and regional offices of international organizations can register as GWP Partners. To distinguish one such entity from another, upon registration as a Partner, such organizations shall always have an extension specifying the region/country in which they operate.

(iii) *GWP Associated Programs and Advisory Centers*

The institutions within which GWP Associated Programs and Advisory Centers are located may apply to be Partners of GWP and are strongly encouraged to do so. The GWP Associated Programs themselves are programs, not institutions, and thus cannot become GWP Partners.

The institutions that are affiliated to, or are members of Associated Programs may apply to become GWP Partners in their own right as this enables them to represent their own specific goals/mission and interests.

3 GWP and individuals or unregistered entities

(i) *Individuals*

The GWP Statutes clearly specify that individuals cannot become Partners of GWP. However, individuals are important contributors to the work of the GWP.

The development of the GWP network and partnerships has been built on the efforts of both institutions and individuals. The institutional approach has a greater potential to promote action, access funding and to create a sense of community ownership while individuals bring in considerable expertise, and social capital. For example, some of the successes achieved to-date in terms of influencing governments to adopt IWRM have been achieved through the work of individuals who are not necessarily affiliated to any organization.

GWP thus gives recognition to the important role of individuals in the network, even though such individuals cannot become GWP Partners. The following provisions therefore shall govern the way GWP treats such individuals;

- Individuals can participate in Country Water Partnership meetings and can serve in committees instituted by the CWP or RWP, but cannot have a vote and do not have decision making powers.
- Individuals can also serve the CWP or RWP in an advisory capacity.

(ii) *Unregistered Entities*

The GWP requires that institutions register to become Partners in order to formalize their relationship with GWP and to ease communications. Only institutions that register and are approved by the Executive Secretary can thus be Partners of the GWP.

As with individuals GWP works with institutions that for various reasons do not establish such a formal relationship and they can make a valuable contribution to our work. The following provisions therefore shall govern the way GWP treats such institutions:

- Representatives of institutions not registered with the GWP may participate in GWP meetings and in committees constituted by the CWP or RWP, but cannot have a vote and do not have decision making powers.
- Representatives of such institutions may also serve a CWP or RWP in an advisory capacity.

4. Partners and Regional, Country and sub-national Partnerships

The GWP Partners constitute the inter-connected global network of institutions that are organized on regional, country and sub-national levels into Water Partnerships. These Water Partnerships are the representatives of the Partners at the respective levels and are the basic unit of organization through which partners exchange ideas, critical knowledge and information and carry out actions to achieve the sustainable management of water resources. To this effect, the water partnerships are a key functional part of the Network but are not themselves Partners. They are an integral part of the network management structure, being groups of partners operating in a specific geographical area

The RWPs and CWPs have a special relationship with the GWPO within the Network which is discussed in a position paper: “The status of Regional Water Partnerships and Country Water Partnerships” (October 2004). Each RWP or CWP has its own operational strategy and work program as well as its own administrative structures. The Country and Regional Water Partnerships are attached to various host institutions that administer funds and employ staff on behalf of the respective Regional or Country Water Partnership.

The Partners located in the Region or Country make up the Consulting Partners for that level and have certain rights and duties with respect to the governance of the RWP or CWP. However, Country and Regional Water Partnerships do not represent the local Partners at the global level of the network, e.g. the annual Consulting Partners meetings (Network Meeting) as the Partners participate in their own right. Further clarification of the roles and relationships of Partners within Country and Regional Water Partnerships is given below.

(i) Partners and the Country Water Partnerships

A Country Water Partnership (CWPs) is a body that is made up of the GWP Partners in a country. Being a GWP Partner in a country makes an organization eligible to participate in all network meetings, whether this is at country, regional or global level. Registering as a GWP Partner (see Section 5) therefore, connects an institution to the GWP global network of Partners, regardless of their entry point.

The operation of each CWP is expected to be guided by Statutes elaborated upon by the CWP itself and agreed upon by the GWP Partners at that level and GWPO. Such statutes shall adhere to global GWP principles. Funds permitting, and also guided by the need to have sustainable operations, each CWP is encouraged to hold an annual Network Meeting of all its Partners.

Representatives of registered Partners may be a member of a country Steering Committee (or equivalent). Where a secretariat exists to manage day-to-day operations of the partnerships it is usually attached to a host institution which administers funds and employs staff on behalf of the partnership, if necessary through a Host Institution Agreement with GWPO.

Due to the size of the Country, GWP-China has established partnerships within Provinces. These Provincial Water Partnerships are made up of the GWP stakeholders of the province and considered equivalent to Country Water Partnerships. GWP China is considered a GWP Regional Water Partnership and collectively the provincial water partnerships constitute what we commonly refer to as a 'GWP region'.

(ii) Partners and the Regional Water Partnerships

The Regional Water Partnership is comprised of all GWP Partners in a region. This is the sum total of all the Partners registered at the Country Water Partnership Level as well as those that will have registered at the Regional Level.

The operation of each RWP is guided by the Statutes elaborated upon by the RWP itself and also agreed upon by the GWP Partners at that level and GWPO. Such statutes shall adhere to global principles. Funds permitting, the GWP Partners at the regional level hold a Network Meeting at least once a year. The purpose of such a meeting is for the Partners to review critical regional network activities and the work program taking into account the developments at all levels of the network.

Representatives of registered Partners in a region may be a member of the regional Steering Committee (or equivalent). Where a secretariat exists to manage day-to-day operations of the partnerships, it is usually attached to a host institution which administers funds and employs staff on behalf of the partnership through a Host Institution Agreement with GWPO and the RWP.

(iii) Partners and Water Partnerships at the sub-national level

Some countries, notably India, have established sub-national level partnerships in order to get the IWRM approach adopted at lower levels. These Water Partnerships are often linked to specific geographic areas or river basins. Such Area or Basin Water Partnerships are linked to the Country Water Partnerships.

For logistical reasons this level of partnership is not formally linked to the GWP network and there is no direct link to GWPO. It is not covered by this policy paper but the Country Water Partnerships are encouraged to promote the same principles and provide the link to the wider network.

5. Formalizing Partners within the Network

Partners may be registered at various levels within the GWP as described below. All Partners at whatever level they are registered hold the same status within the GWP Network.

A prospective Partner shall complete an application form for Partnership entitled “Application to be a Partner of the Global Water Partnership (GWP)” that requires a Partner to agree to basic principles of the GWP as well as setting out the Partners’ benefits, rights and obligations. This is submitted to the Executive Secretary of the Global Water Partnership. The Application is attached as Appendix I. The Executive Secretary, and only the ES, has been given the power to approve the acceptance of a new Partner, Article 3 (2) and Article 11(3) of the GWPO Statutes.

At the Regional and Country level applicants may submit their application to the respective Chairs for registration and processing. The Chairs shall not exclude any institution from becoming a Partner. The Chairs shall then submit all applications to the GWPO Executive Secretary for approval. Where no partnership exists in a country or region an applicant should apply directly to the GWPO.

All Partners, whether registered at country, Regional or global level hold the same status within the GWP Network.

(i) Procedure in Countries with Country Water Partnership

Prospective GWP Partners in countries where there is a Country Water Partnership should submit their Partner Application forms to their respective Country Water Partnership. The Country Water Partnership will, after processing the application, (within a week) relay the application to the Regional Secretariat of the RWP in regions where this exists and to the GWPO Executive Secretary for approval. In China, a prospective Partners sends the application directly to the Provincial Water Partnership and the GWP-China secretariat for registration. After processing GWP-China submits the application to the GWPO Executive Secretary for approval.

(ii) Procedure in Countries with no Country Water Partnership but with RWP

Prospective GWP Partners from countries where there is no Country Water Partnership, but there is a RWP should submit their application to the Regional Water Partnership of the region within which their country is classified. Such Partners will serve as the GWP network’s communication linkage with these countries. The RWP will, after processing, relay the application to the GWPO Executive Secretary for approval.

(iii) Procedure where neither CWP nor RWP exist

Partners from areas where there is neither a CWP nor RWP, submit their Partner application forms to the GWPO Secretariat in Stockholm, who shall process and approve the application and make necessary entries onto the global database on Partners.

For those regions in the process of transformation from regional Technical Advisory Committees (RTAC) to Regional Water Partnerships, the prospective Partner shall register through the GWPO Secretariat with a copy to the RTAC Chair.

(iv) Payment of a Registration Fee

Registration as a Partner at the Global or Regional level of GWP does not involve paying a fee. Country Water Partnerships may opt to introduce a fee for Partners in order to build greater commitment and ownership at the national level and enable them to participate in country level activities. In this case Partners may be required to pay either a fee on initial registration or annually based on a sliding scale. Where a Country Water Partnership adopts such a measure, the level of fees payable should be country-specific and should not exclude any poor or marginalized groups.

6. The Benefits, Rights and Obligations of a Partner

The benefits, rights and obligations of a Partner are provided for in the GWPO Statutes, Article 3(3), as well as in local level statutes. The benefits of being a Partner mostly relate to being part of a global action network to achieve sustainable water resources management. By registering as a GWP Partner, an institution may present itself as a “Partner of the Global Water Partnership.”

(i) Benefits to a Partner

The Network provides a Partner with services such as:

- Being part of a global and local level multi-stakeholder platform, with a voice and influence at national and international policy discussions;
- A channel through which to establish contact with other Partners, including the right to participate at the annual Network Meeting (Consulting Partners meeting);
- Guidance on identifying critical needs for the sustainable management of water resources as well as on possible ways of meeting them;
- An opportunity to match one Partner’s needs with another Partner’s resources;
- An opportunity to contribute to the development of the concept of integrated water resources management;
- Access to global information through GWP and various Partner newsletters, etc.

(ii) Obligations of a Partner

A Partner is obliged to:

- Co-ordinate its relevant activities with those of other concerned organizations;
- Share information and experience freely with the other Partners;
- Actively engage in the recruitment of GWP Partners as well as facilitate the Partner’s adherence to GWP principles;

- Give advice and professional contributions to the Network, the Organization and to other Partners, on such conditions as may be agreed either free of charge up to a reasonable level or at a mutually agreed charge above that level.

(iii) *Rights of a Partner*

According to Article 9 of the Statutes a Partner has the right to:

- participate and vote at Network meetings (see below);
- be consulted before nominations by the Nominating Committee to the Steering Committee are made for all positions other than those of the GWPO Chair and the GWPO Executive Secretary, Article 8(4)(b);
- recommend amendments to the Statutes regarding the Network and Organization;
- vote on a proposal to dissolve the entire Network;
- adopt the strategic directions and policies of the Network and recommend actions to be taken on the basis of the adopted strategic directions and policies;
- review and comment on the annual activity report and financial statement of the GWP Steering Committee;
- consider and decide on the expulsion of Partners from the Network (see below).

(iv) *Partners and the GWP annual Network Meeting (Consulting Partners Meeting)*

GWP Partners have the right to participate at the annual (and extraordinary) Network Meetings, Article 9(1). Such meetings are called by the GWP Steering Committee and have commonly come to be known as the Consulting Partners Meeting. The matters to be dealt with at the Network Meetings are the central issues for the operations of the GWP Network and the GWP Organisation, Article 9(2).

The general procedure for conducting the meeting is to decide by consensus, with voting as an option where deemed necessary (By-laws for the Annual Network meeting are under preparation).

The Consulting Partners meeting is a network meeting of the GWP Partners, but the meeting is also open to anyone who wishes to attend and to participate. The GWP Chair has the right to restrict participation to GWP Partners only on certain topics. In the case of a vote, only registered GWP Partners would have the right to exercise a vote.

(v) *Expulsion of a Partner*

Although it is the Executive Secretary who accepts a Partner as part of the Network, it is only the Network Meeting (Consulting Partners meeting) that can decide on the expulsion of a Partner, Article 9(2)(d). Such a decision is based on a recommendation of the Steering Committee.

It is the Steering Committee (SC) that will oversee the Partners and ensure that they respect the Principles of the Network and the SC may recommend expulsion if a Partner violates the principles of the Network, Article 7(7)(j).

(vi) *Withdrawal*

A Partner may withdraw from the Network. Such a decision becomes effective when the notice to withdraw reaches the Country or Regional Chair or the Executive Secretary, Article 18(1).

7. Building a Database of GWP Partners

The GWPO Secretariat shall maintain a complete list of GWP Partners from the country water partnership to the global level. However, it is not feasible for the Secretariat to maintain an electronic database that all GWP Water Partnerships can use to maintain their own records online and offline as i) the software and the required hardware platforms may not be compatible throughout the global network and ii) the information kept or required by each Water Partnership may not be appropriate for all.

Instead, based on the principle of subsidiarity, each Water Partnership at regional and country level shall maintain its own records. Country Water Partnerships should maintain records on any sub/national water partnerships.

To ensure the minimum amount of essential information on Partners and that their contact information is provided across the network, certain fundamental data elements should be included in all databases. It is these elements that should be forwarded from the Country to Regional Water Partnerships and from the Regional Water Partnerships to the Global database maintained and kept up to date by the GWPO Secretariat.

To ensure that such a database system comes into effect, it is necessary for the Network to agree and implement the registration procedure of Partners at global, regional and country levels according to the criteria elaborated in section 5. Essentially this means that:

- Country and sub-national level Partners register with Country Water Partnerships or directly with the Regional Water Partnership where there is no Country Water Partnership.
- Partners from those countries that are not in a GWP region or in regions in transition from a regional TAC submit their application directly to the GWPO Secretariat.

The GWP Secretariat is responsible for building the database of Partners from locations where neither a RWP nor a CWP exists and include them in its knowledge management system.

8. Use of the GWP Logo

The use of the GWP letterhead and logo is confined for use by GWP, the GWPO as well as the RWPs and the CWPs. The GWP Partners may not use the logo, unless given prior permission by the GWPO Executive Secretary, but have the right to present themselves as Partners of the Global Water Partnership.