

**PREPARATORY MEETING FOR ESTABLISHING OF  
AMERICAN REGIONAL WORKING GROUP (AMRWG)**

15 August 2018, 09.00-10.30 hours (Session-I)

15 August 2018, 11.00-12.30 hours (Session-II)

Saskatoon, Canada

**Presented by the Chairman**

**Background Note**

1. The International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID) was established in 1950 and has currently a network of more than 70-member countries around the world. Different geographical regions of the world have different characteristics defining their ecology and populations. The member countries of ICID have been categorized in four regions, namely, Asia, Africa, America and Europe. Accordingly, in order to promote linkages and networking among the countries, four different working groups have been established, namely, American, Asian, African and European Regional Working Groups.
2. In order to achieve the larger goal of Food Security in the Latin American countries (South and Central Americas), ICID's 49<sup>th</sup> meeting of International Executive Council (IEC) approved the establishment of a Latin American Regional Working Group (LARWG) in 1999 at Bali, Indonesia with seven countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guyana, Honduras and Mexico) as its members. There is vast scope of water resources development and its management in Americas as irrigated area in the region is only 46 million hectare which is about only 16% of the total arable area of the region.
3. The LARWG was mandated to assist in the development of broad-based ICID National Committees in Latin American countries; obtain and disseminate information on irrigation and drainage in these countries; organise national and international discussions on relevant scientific and technical issues; and work as a catalyst for promoting better contact with the ICID and other relevant international organizations. The most important task of the LARWG was to identify organizations that could contribute to the development of irrigation and drainage in the region.
4. The 4<sup>th</sup> Inter-Regional Conference on "Environment-Water: Competitive Use and Conservation Strategies for Water and Natural Resources" was organized during 27-30 August 2001 at Brazil by the LARWG to focus on environmental issues of the region. Dr. Chandra Madramootoo (Canada) shared several articles from Latin American countries, which were published as country papers in the ICID Strategy document at the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Water Forum held at The Hague (2000). They were also included in CD-ROM brought out by ICID as a part of Golden Jubilee Year celebrations (1999-2000). In 2000, Dr. Beltran (FAO) distributed copies of FAO Water Report 20 titled 'Irrigation in Latin American and the Caribbean in Figures'. The Brazilian National Committee of ICID (ABID) also brought out a new issue of its Journal (ITEM) with a special article on 'Irrigation of Coffee' in 2000. Later, in 2002, Chair Dr. Ricardo L. Brito (Brazil) contributed a paper on Brazil in the Special Event for the "Vision on Water for Food and Rural Development" held during the 18<sup>th</sup> ICID Congress (2002) at Montreal, Canada.
5. The Group was re-established / renamed as American Regional Working Group (AMRWG) in 2003 to attract a wider participation from ICID National Committees in North, Central and South Americas with eight countries (Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Chile, Guyana, Mexico and USA) as its members. In order to encourage the Latin American countries, ITAL-ICID had organized one-day Seminar with the theme "*Water for Food, Water and Health*" on 25 February 2010 at National Research Council, Italy under the leadership of VPH Lucio Ubertini (Italy). The seminar provided good opportunity for Latin American Countries and their representatives to share information on their activities and explore further avenues for cooperation with each other. The main objectives of the workshop were to share the links between water and food, water and agriculture, water and development among the Latin American countries. The representatives of Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Peru, Ecuador and Venezuela participated in the workshop.
6. Keeping in view the mandate of AMRWG, the group focused on (1) the broad-basing of the ICID National Committee in Latin American countries; (2) to organise national and international discussions on relevant scientific and technical issues, and (3) to act as a catalyst for promoting better contact with other relevant international organizations in the region. Later during Adelaide (2012) meetings, Mr. Maurice Roos (USA) and Mr. Machel Mierzwa from USA and Dr. Clarke Ballard (Australia) discussed ways to enthuse the countries in Americas to get involve in the activities of the Commission. With this objective in mind, VPH Laurie C. Tollefson (Canada), who was Vice-President In-charge of Americas 2012 communicated with several South American countries for reinvigorating the AMRWG. Failing all the efforts, the AMRWG was closed in 2012.

7. Given above, a Preparatory Meeting for establishing American Regional Working Group (AMRWG) was held on 11 October 2017 at Mexico City, Mexico. A Summary of the proceedings of the meeting is available at **Annex**. Given that many National Committees (NCs) from Americas have become inactive in ICID, it is worth exploring the opportunity to re-activate the NCs in the region and re-establish the American Regional Working Group especially when the 69<sup>th</sup> International Executive Council (IEC) meetings & International Conference has been scheduled to be held from 12-17 August 2018 in North America i.e. at Saskatoon, Canada.

8. It was therefore thought appropriate to come together on 15 August 2018 during the 69<sup>th</sup> IEC meetings at Saskatoon, Canada and discuss strategies to revive the American Regional Working Group and bring in more countries from South America to ICID for mutually sharing the benefits of ICID's global network.

#### **Issues for discussions**

9. Participating countries/ Members / attendees may deliberate on issues such as:

**(i) Feedback from 'Special Session of Latin Americas' held on 14 August 2018 at Saskatoon, Canada**

The Chairman may present a brief report of the 'Special Session of Latin Americas' and deliberate on following issues:

- (a) Are there institutions / network like Southern African Regional Irrigation Association (SARIA) in Africa, to promote agriculture water management in South/Central America?
- (b) Do the South / Central American countries gain by joining ICID?
- (c) How can linkages between irrigation institutions in South/Central America be revised so that they can work together with the rest of the ICID network?
- (d) How can appropriate technologies in irrigation and drainage be shared among South American countries?
- (e) Is language a problem for interlinkages with ICID? If so, how can the language barriers be overcome?

**(ii) Regional Membership of ICID**

10. The Latin American Meeting on Irrigation and Drainage held on 11 October 2017 at Mexico City organized with the objective to foster dialogues and cooperation among the Latin American countries recommended that the Latin American and Caribbean Region be incorporated into ICID as a 'Single Member', with regional representation. The Management Board (MB) of ICID at its sixth virtual (MB-6/17) meeting held on 22 November 2017, decided to set up a Task Team to study the feasibility of Single Membership for Regional Organizations (TT-RO) under the Chairmanship of President Hon. Peter S. Lee (UK) to consider the recommendation of single membership for regional organizations representing a group of countries such as SARIA etc. Chair of TT PH Peter S. Lee may apprise the members present and provide the updates by presenting the report of the TT-RO at the meeting.

11. Members/attendees may deliberate and evolve an action plan for at least three years with a new mandate.



**NOTES FOR CHAIRPERSON:**

- 1. Draft minutes of this meeting to be submitted to ICID Secretariat at Saskatoon (Canada) after the meeting.
- 2. Chair to participate and present his report to PCSO meeting on 15 August 2018.

**AMERICAN REGIONAL WORKING GROUP (AMRWG)**

12 October 2017, 09:00-12.30 hours, Mexico City, Mexico

**Summary of the Proceedings of the Meeting:**

1. Vice President Hon. Laurie C. Tollefson (Canada), who graciously agreed to Chair the meeting, welcomed the representatives from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico and Peru and invited Secretary General Er. Avinash C. Tyagi to present the pretext for the meeting and background of ICID. SG Avinash Tyagi prepared his slide presentation in Spanish and his remarks were also translated in Spanish for better understanding. SG Avinash Tyagi informed that the 'Latin American Working Group' (LARWG) was first established in 1999 with seven countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guyana, Honduras and Mexico) as its members. Several events including the 4th Inter-Regional Conference were organized during the period. The group was renamed as 'American Regional Working Group' (AMRWG) Group in 2003 to attract wider participation. However, it was disbanded in 2012 due to lack of interest in spite of best efforts from VPH Lucio Ubertini (Italy), Mr. Maurice Roos (USA), Dr. Clark Ballard (Australia) and VPH Laurie Tollefson (Canada) and several other National Committees. SG Avinash Tyagi explained the benefits of joining ICID briefly to the participants.
2. It was also generally felt that language is a big issue and needs to be considered if Latin American countries are to actively participate in ICID. It was also explained that the Latin American countries could become a country member, an institutional member or an individual member.
3. To initiate discussion, SG Avinash Tyagi raised questions: (1) How do we find opportunities to work together (2) Did an irrigation network exist in Central and South America. The Latin American representatives informed that such a network didn't exist but they would like to start one. The feeling was that ICID would be useful in Latin America and that Mexico should take lead and work with ICID Central Office on the subject.
4. VPH Tollefson informed that while President Hon. Chandra A. Madramootoo (Canada) was dynamic in establishing the LARWG in early years, he had recently been to Brazil and had talks with Embrapa. He felt that it would be difficult to go through the governments these days and therefore would need to find a way through the private sector.
5. The participants then discussed joining ICID and proposed the following possible steps to be taken: (a) Have MXCID in cooperation with ICID Central Office correspond with all Latin American countries particularly with Ministers of Agriculture / Ministers of Water Resources inviting them to join ICID?; and (b) Have a 'Regional Special Session' for Latin American countries at Saskatoon, Canada where the participating countries could interact and discuss more about working together and explore ways to join ICID? (c) Consider establishing a Spanish speaking node in Mexico on the same line as International Research Program for Irrigation and Drainage (IRPID) in China and Iran for transfer technology.
6. It was proposed to develop the theme for the 'Regional Special Session' around climate change, water management and competing demands for water, in cooperation with Mexican National Committee (MXCID). MXCID can then send special invitations to Latin American countries for attending the 'Regional Special Session' at Saskatoon.
7. VPH Tollefson further informed that prior to the AMRWG meeting, Latin American Meeting on Irrigation and Drainage was held on 11 October 2017 at Mexico. Ing. Marco Antonio Parra Cota (CONAGUA, Mexico) and Dr. Nahún H. Garcia Villanueva (IMTA, Mexico) Chaired and Co-chaired the meeting, respectively, whereas ICID Young Professional Dr. Carolos Sánchez (Ecuador) acted as a Rapporteur where a group of experts from 7 Latin countries participated.
8. The Latin American meeting was held in two sessions. In Session I, five presentations were made as below:
  - (a) Background and use of water in agriculture.
  - (b) Organization, administration and management of water for irrigation.
  - (c) Evolution and development of irrigation and drainage.
  - (d) Problems, challenges and opportunities for the hydro-agricultural sector.
  - (e) Possible lines and forms of cooperation with Latin American countries.

9. In Session II, a workshop was held focusing on following two issues:

- (a) Key challenges in the Latin American and Caribbean region and options for their solution.
- (b) Possible forms of cooperation between the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

10. Latin American Meeting focused on review of current and future state of water use in agriculture; the form of organization, administration and management of the water resources used for food production; development of irrigation and drainage; as well as the issues, challenges, needs and possible forms of cooperation and collaboration within the hydro-agriculture sector between Latin American and Caribbean countries. The consensus was achieved on strategic actions that need to be promoted in order to achieve water security and the sustainable development of the region's hydro-agriculture sector.

11. It was generally noted that the problems related to water management in agriculture in Latin America are very similar, varying in size and degree, and therefore it was proposed to establish a Task Team (TT) to look into the issues emerging from the 'Declaration', including the formation of Regional Association for ICID membership.

