

Minutes of the First Meeting of the
WORKING GROUP ON ENVIRONMENT (WG-ENV)
 New Delhi, India
 06 December 2009: 09.30-13.15 hours
Strategy Theme: Basin

Year of Establishment: 2008

Completion of the Mandate: 2014

Mandate: To understand the process of environmental impact analysis making this a part of all project evaluation, major environmental problems as addressed by each country, and effects of irrigation and drainage on the natural environment, flora, fauna and human beings; and recognising the project/site specific nature of the problem, to provide guidance to project designers and managers in identifying and minimising adverse environmental impacts

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As per the minutes of the 23rd meeting of the Working Group on Environmental Impacts of Irrigation, Drainage and Flood Control Projects (WG-ENV), a new name has been proposed for the WG as “*Working Group on Environment*” (with the same acronym as WG-ENV). A new mandate has also been proposed. The new WG-ENV will hold its first meeting in December 2009 at New Delhi. The tenure of the erstwhile WG-ENV was from 1986 to 2008. The current membership of the WG is emerging from the erstwhile WG-ENV.

Members Present: (1) Dr. Hu Heping, Chairman (China, 2008); (2) Prof. Yih-Chi Tan, Vice Chairman, (Chinese Taipei, 2008); (3) Dr. Ge van den Eertwegh, Secretary (The Netherlands, 2008); (4) Mr. Barkat Hadid (Syria, 2008) represented by Mr. Jabbar Aziz Beigi; (5) Mr. Mohammad Kazem Siahi (Iran, 2008) represented by Mr. Ezzatollah Farhadi; (6) Mr. Osmo Antero Purhonen (Finland, 2008); (7) Dr. Choi, Joong-Dae (Korea, 2008); (8) Vice President Hon. Jose A. Ortiz Fdz.-Urrutia (Spain, 2008); (9) Vice President Illahi B. Shaikh (Pakistan, 2008) represented by Mr. Husnain Ahmad; (10) Mr. Taner Kimence (Turkey, 2008); (11) Mr. Serge Marlet (France, 2008) represented by Dr. Sylvain R. Perret; and (12) Prof. Dr. N. Hatcho (Japan, 2008) represented by Prof. Kazumi Yamaoka.

Members Honoraire Present: President Dr. Chandra Madramootoo (Canada), and VPH Henri Tardieu (France).

Observers: (1) Mr. François Chrétien (Canada); (2) Mr. C.K. Agrawal (India); (3) Dr. Sandor Szalai (Hungary); (4) Mr. Nityananda Mukherjee (India); (5) Mr. Gao Lihui (China); (6) Mr. Pei Yuansheng (China); (7) Mr. Huang Jiesheng (China); (8) Mr. Clarke Ballard (Australia); (9) Dr. Gerhard Backeberg (South Africa); (10) Abdul Rahman Aljughaiman (Saudi Arabia); (11) Navneet Kalia (India); (12) Mr. M.S. Thakur (India); (13) Mr. Bernard Vincent (France); (14) Mr. Mohammad Sadegh Jafari (Iran); (15) Mr. Azim Ashayeri (Iran); (16) Mr. Mostafa Vatanzadeh (Iran); (17) Mr. Jaakko Sierla (Finland); (18) Dr. A.B. Khot (India); (19) Mr. Reza Daftarimanesh (Iran); (20) Dr. Mehdi Ghomeshi (Iran); (21) Mr. Faisal Shalhoub (Iran); (22) Mr. Abbas Rikhtechi (Iran); (23) Mr. V.M. Sikka (India); (24) Pancharutnam Dakshnamoorthy (India); (25) Dr. Kim Jintaek (Korea); (26) Mr. B.S. Patil (India); (27) Mr. S.D. Kabbur (India); (28) Mr. Prashant Jaiswal (India); (29) Mr. Praveen Jain (India); (30) Mr. Laurie Tollefson (Canada).

A. FINAL SITTING OF ERSTWHILE WG-ENV

Around 44 persons were present at the New Delhi (2009) meeting which included WG members and observers.

Item 1 : Confirmation of the minutes of 23rd meeting of the WG-ENV

The minutes of the 23rd meeting of the Working Group held at Lahore in October 2008 were confirmed.

Item 2 : Unfinished issues emerging from erstwhile WG-ENV

2.1 Impacts of water projects on human health

At the Lahore meeting (2008), the Working Group discussed the need to focus on effects of water quality on human health and its linkage with irrigation and drainage. Water-related diseases are issues for consideration. The WG suggested removing the words '*in rural areas*' from the title and keep only '*Impacts of water projects on human health*'.

In addition, at the New Delhi meeting (2009) it was decided that some more changes should be made. Water projects in the title of 2.1 should be replaced by irrigation and drainage projects. The new title for 2.1 will then be '*Impacts of irrigation and drainage projects on human health*'. In the mandate, ecological could be replaced by biological. On the other hand, ecology has a wider cover than biology. Ecology is about how systems work as a whole and includes biology. Therefore, we leave ecological in our mandate. We look both to positive and negative impacts of irrigation and drainage projects.

The new mandate of WG-ENV can be found under Item 3.

2.2 The environmental cost and benefits of irrigation schemes involving large dams and solutions for mitigating negative impacts

At the Lahore meeting (2008), the Working Group agreed that it is useful to highlight all positive and negative environmental impacts of irrigation and drainage projects rather than pointing out only the negative impacts. It was suggested that the possibility of incorporating mitigation/adaptation measures so as to reduce any negative environmental consequences/ impacts from projects as far as possible should be kept in view in impact analysis.

It was stated (2009) that irrigation and drainage projects often change from local to regional environment and this change itself is sometimes seen as negative, where the environmental or total impact might be positive. It was further stated to look at the scale issues and that it is important not to forget the scale to which extent impacts progress. WG-ENV should bear that in mind (local, regional, national, and global) with her activities. Measures, impacts, and tools are likely to be scale-dependent.

It is important for WG-ENV to look for cooperation with other WG's within ICID and organizations outside ICID, e.g. IUCN.

2.3 The improvement of agricultural return flow and requirement of environmental flow

Neither Mr. Mills (IAL-ANCID, Australia) nor a representative was available for presentation on the subject. Mr. Clarke Ballard (Australia), who was present in the meeting, may contact IAL-ANCID for presentation on the subject.

Recommendations of the conference on '*Environmental flows of Himalayan Rivers*' held in July 2009 were circulated during the meeting. The Chair will contact the authors of these recommendations and discuss about cooperation and/or presentations of results in the future.

ICID President Dr. Chandra Madramootoo stated that environmental flow issues as well as drainage return flows are of interest to ICID and should be discussed within the WG-ENV, both from a water quantity and quality perspective. He also stated the importance of looking at acid-sulphur-soils, organic soils, and its environmental impacts (suitability for sustainable agricultural use, solutes in drainage water, soil subsidence etc).

2.4 Presentations in 2007, 2008, and 2009

Presentations made in 2007, 2008, and 2009 are listed in **Annex** for reference.

Item 3 : Suggestions to the new WG-ENV

Considering the suggestions made earlier, the new mandate of WG-ENV was finalized as below:

“To provide guidance to policy makers, planners, designers, and managers in the irrigation and drainage sector on the environmental aspects of drainage and irrigation systems. The environmental aspects are physical, chemical, ecological, socio-economic and cultural, as well as concerns to the effects on climate and human health. By looking at environmental aspects, the working group will aim for the management of a sustainable environment, maximizing positive and minimizing adverse effects of irrigation and drainage systems”.

Water quality aspects of drainage return flows play an important role in the work of WG-ENV.

It was also suggested to possibly consider food safety as a theme to be addressed. On the other hand, focusing on main environmental themes and sub-themes by WG-ENV was important. For the time being, therefore, the food safety theme was put on hold.

B. MAIDEN SITTING OF NEW WG-ENV**Item 4 : Formalization of the composition of the new WG****4.1 New nominations**

Pakistan: The Pakistan National Committee (PANCID) has nominated (19 August 2009) Mr. Javeed Iqbal Bokhary in place of Dr. I.B. Shaikh for the membership of WG-ENV. His nomination was accepted in principle (Mr. Husnain Ahmad represented him) subject to formal acceptance during the next meeting in 2010 when Mr Bokhary is present. In mean time Mr. Bokhary may contribute to the activities of the WG, as appropriate.

South-Africa: Dr. Theresa Volschenk' nomination (nominee in 2008) was again deferred to the next meeting in 2010. She was represented by Dr. Gerhard Backeberg.

India: Mr. C.K. Agrawal was nominated in place of Mr. A. K. Ganju (nominee in 2008). Mr. Agrawal was present and his nomination was accepted.

Iraq: Mr. Ahmed Aziz's nomination (nominee in 2008) was again deferred to the next meeting in 2010. Mr. Aziz was neither present nor represented in the meeting.

France: Dr. Sylvain Perret was nominated in place of Mr. Serge Marlet. Dr. Perret was present and his nomination was accepted.

4.2 Membership emerging from erstwhile WG-ENV

All existing members of WG-ENV will remain in position, with the new nominations and replacements effected under 4.1. The attendance list showed that the following members were neither present nor represented or replaced:

- Slovenia: Smiljan Juvan
- Egypt: Shaden Abdel Gawad
- Portugal: Almeida Fernandes
- Morocco: Belguenani Hassane
- Thailand: Natha Hungspreug

There were no contributions received from the persons mentioned above. The Central Office may seek fresh nominations from these countries.

Dr. Dennis Wichelns (USA), though not present (due to Indian Visa problem), contributed in 2009 by sending journal articles to the Secretary of the WG that were of interest to WG-ENV.

Note: For WG-ENV to be successful, it is important that its members contribute actively to its activities throughout the year and by preferably physically attending the WG meetings cum workshops regularly.

Item 5 : Election of Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary

The WG has deliberated the issue of new Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary during the meeting. For continuity of the activities, it was decided that the present Chair will continue as the New Chairman. The Vice Chair and Secretary continue as well. Item 5, however, will be on the agenda again during the WG meeting in 2011.

Item 6 : Discussion on the new WG mandate (considering the suggestions from erstwhile WG-ENV)

6.1 Environmental aspects of irrigation and drainage projects

Refer Item 7 for scope of this item.

6.2 Impacts of irrigation and drainage projects on human health

Refer Item 7 for scope of this item.

6.3 Management of a sustainable environment (maximizing positive and minimizing adverse effects of irrigation and drainage systems)

Refer Item 7 for scope of this item.

6.4 Website of WG-ENV

The Chairman informed that the work on website is still pending and he will take appropriate actions shortly.

6.5 ICID position paper of WG-ENV

The Secretary, WG-ENV covered (2008) the draft report of WG-ENV to be served as a draft ICID position paper. Following structure / sections were approved for modifying the draft version:

- Introduction and objective
- Environmental impacts
- Good Governance
- Guidelines and Criteria (references and remarks to existing documents)
- Implementation aspects
- Legislation and Enforcement
- Lessons learned
- Conclusions and recommendations

It was also decided that the Secretary will act as an editor and a coordinator. Secretary apologized for not having finished the draft version. He, however, informed the WG members of the work done so far, e.g. looking at information and documents relevant for the sections mentioned.

There was a discussion on the position paper - '*Where do we stand now*'? The paper should be more focused. Towards the conclusion of the position paper, this focus should ultimately be clear. It was a good suggestion from the participants to define and focus on 3 to 4 sub-themes as far as the conclusions of the paper are concerned. These would then be WG's major focus for the next three years to come. The WG may elaborate further on these sub-themes, based on conclusions and questions raised in the paper on the following issues:

1. Physical, chemical, and biological impacts
 2. Socio-economic and cultural impacts
 3. Impacts on human health
 4. Good Governance and enforcement
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The enforcement of taking environmental impacts into account can either take place by volunteer action, by policy plan, and/or by law and legislation.

The WG will link the position paper to objectives and mandate of WG-ENV. The length of the paper should be about 5 pages, but not exceeding 10 pages.

Mr. Henri Tardieu (France) will provide Secretary with a recent and good example of an ICID position paper.

6.6 New Items: The WG plans to focus on 3-4 sub-themes as above.

Item 7 : Work plan

A three-year rolling work plan (2010-2012) will be developed. It will be, in some way, a follow-up of the position paper and will include the sub-themes as mentioned above. The Chair will do his best to set up an action plan shortly.

It was suggested to include 'Nutrient leaching from agricultural soils' in the WG-ENV workshop in 2010 (see sub-theme 1).

Item 8 : Any other business

Seminar on Environmental flows at World Water Week, August 2009

Ms. Katharine Cross (IUCN) sought (2 July 2009) ICID's cooperation with IUCN and Environmental Flows Network in future as they would like the perspective of the agriculture sector in the network. More information on their network is available at www.eflownet.org. Members noted the information.

Human Resource Survey for Disaster and Risk Management

Members noted the information. More information is available at their survey link <http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/?p=WEB22986VV9L7G>.

The First Drafts of White Papers in Preparation for the First UNCCD/ CST Scientific Conference

Members noted the information. More information on "Understanding Desertification and Land Degradation Trends" is available at their website www.drylandscience.org

Journal papers

Members noted the information on two papers circulated by Dr. Gé van den Eertwegh, Secretary, WG-ENV.

International Conference on 'Environmental Flow Requirements of Himalayan Rivers', 21-22 July 2009, Lucknow, India

Members noted the information. Chairman, WG-ENV will contact Mr. Ravindra Kumar (India) of the organizing committee (e-mail: ravindra53@yahoo.co.in) for the proceedings of the conference and to explore opportunities for further cooperation.

Chairman thanked all participants for their attendance and lively contribution to the 2009 meeting of WG-ENV. Meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

WORKING GROUP ON ENVIRONMENT (WG-ENV)**List of papers presented during WG-ENV Workshop at Sacramento (2007)**

- An introduction to Three Gorges Project and its Environmental Aspects by Dr. Hu Heping (China)
- Brief on environmental impact of large dams by Dr. Illahi B. Shaikh (Pakistan)
- A brief on an Workshop organized by TWCWM, IHA with support from Arab Water Council, Arab Fund for ESD, Ministry of WRI of Egypt, IWRA and ICID in February 2007 at Cairo, Egypt, by Er. M. Gopalakrishnan, Secretary General, ICID.
- The Impacts of Drainage Projects on the Environment in Egypt by Ghada G. El-Refaie (Egypt)
- Non-Point Source Pollution Loads from Selected Agricultural Land Uses in Korea by J. Choi (South Korea)
- Multi-functionalities of paddy fields and multiple uses of agricultural water by N. Hatcho (Japan)
- Pontine land drainage system by Stefano Salbitani (Italy)
- SEA/EIA in The Netherlands: an overview by Gé van den Eertwegh (The Netherlands)

List of papers presented during WG-ENV Workshop at Lahore (2008)

- Water-sector environmental management program in Pakistan by representative Muhammad Ashraf Bodla (Pakistan)
- Water transfer project from South to North and it's environmental perspectives by Chairman Hu Heping (China)
- ICID special issue journal paper by WG-ENV, final report of WG-ENV, contribution of WG-ENV to WWF5, new name and mandate by Secretary Gé van den Eertwegh (The Netherlands)

List of presentations during WG-ENV Workshop at New Delhi (2009)

1. EU-project PSI-connect (see www.psiconnect.eu) Policy Science Interactions by Secretary Gé van den Eertwegh (The Netherlands)
 2. 'Uncertainty, that's for sure' by Secretary Gé van den Eertwegh (The Netherlands)
 3. 'Methane Emission from Irrigated Paddy Field: Case in China' by Chairman Hu Heping (China). Not presented in the workshop due to lack of time. However, presented during the meeting of WG-CLIMATE on 7 December 2009 by Vice Chairman Dr. Yih Chi Tan (Chinese Taipei).
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