

**Minutes of the 23rd Meeting of the
EUROPEAN REGIONAL WORKING GROUP (ERWG)**

11 October 2017, 09:00-10.30 hours (Session-I)

11 October 2017, 11:00-12.30 hours (Session-II)

Mexico City, Mexico

Presented by the Chairman

Year of Establishment: 1995

Mandate: The mission of ERWG is to promote awareness about critical ICID relevant water issues at all levels in Europe and to pay special attention to the environmentally sustainable water management in Europe.

Members Present: (1) Vice President Ian Makin (UK), Chairman; (2) VPH Prof. Dr. Peter Kovalenko (Ukraine), Vice-Chairman; (3) Mr. Olli-Matti Verta (Finland), Secretary; (4) Dr. Sami Bourfa (France) represented Dr. Dominique Rollin; (5) VPH Dr. Laszlo Hayde (Hungary); (6) Dr. Marco Arcieri (Italy); (7) Dr. (Mrs.) Irene G. Bondarik (Russia); (8) Vice President Prof. Charlotte de Fraiture (The Netherlands); and (9) Dr. Vijay K. Labhsetwar represented Er. Avinash C. Tyagi, Secretary General.

Observers: (i) Mr. Hannes Puu (Estonia); (ii) Prof. Dr.-Ing. Klaus Rottcher (Germany); (iii) Dr. Givi Gavardashvili (Georgia); (iv) Dr. Anna Tedeschi (Italy); (v) Ir. Yuzi Mazhaisku (Russia); (vi) PH Bart Schultz (The Netherlands); (vii) Dr. Maurice Roos (USA); and (viii) PH Peter S. Lee (UK).

Website: <http://erwg.icidonline.org/>

ERWG Minutes Item 1: Action Taken Report by Chair

1. VP Ian Makin (UK), Chair of the WG presented a report on the actions taken on the decisions and proposals of the European Regional Working Group at its 22nd meeting held at Chiang Mai in November 2016. WG chair informed that there has been little action during the year due to other work pressures. To avoid a repeat, Chair proposed to (i) develop and agree with WG members on milestones; and (ii) hold regular (possibly bi-monthly) web-meetings for reviewing progress on agreed activities.

2. No new nomination was received from NCs during the year. Present membership status of ERWG is at **Annex 7, (page 55)**.

ERWG Minues Item 1.1: Strengthening the membership in Europe

3. WG noted the efforts made by the Central Office and the President for reactivation of the membership of Germany. VP Dr. Bondarik apprised the Group about the progress on the membership of Georgia and Latvia in ICID. VP Dr. Bondarik informed that an official letter has been received from the Ministry of Agriculture Rural Estate of Latvia, indicating that the government was not willing to support or to join an NGO (National Committee). VPH Lee pointed out that the ICID By-law and the Constitution allow a registered group of individuals to apply as members. VP Dr. Bondarik further informed that she has sent a letter to Belarus and will meet the officials of the Academy of Agricultural Science of Belarus and discuss their potential membership. ESTCID has also been actively talking with Latvia, Lithuania and Belarus to join ICID. It was proposed that there should be examples of the various organizational models of existing national committees that potential members may consider to adopt.

ERWG Minutes Item 2: Road Map to ICID Vision 2030 - Activities relevant to European Region

4. WG discussed and reviewed action plan of the WG (Annex 2 of the agenda, page 68) and discussed about the possible workshop to be held in 2018. It was proposed that one session of the ERWG meeting in 2018 be used as a seminar to discuss hot issues in agricultural water management in Europe. One issue could be the AFEID example of assessment of performance of irrigation materials under consideration for subsidies to encourage installation. It was agreed that National Committees and members will propose presentations to the workshop. A call will be sent out in November 2017 and a call for proposals and abstracts will be received till end of February 2018, and selection by the end of March 2018. The selection panel for the workshop will be VP Ian Makin, PH Peter Lee and Dr. Marco Arcieri.

5. The e-Discussion on Water Issues: After discussion it was agreed that the Chairman will discuss this issue with the YPs from the region as well as IYPeF to explore the possibility to organise e-discussions with their support.

ERWG Minutes Item 3: Review of policy issues impacting irrigation and drainage sector

6. Group highlighted the need for review of the policy documents related to water resources impacting irrigation and drainage sector in Europe which is included as Activity B2.1 of the action plan of ERWG. Members agreed that the starting point for this could be the “Water Related Risks” document produced in the ERWG couple of years ago. VPH Laszlo Hayde agreed to locate the original documents. The progress of WFD and recommendations for the future was agreed as a potentially useful contribution. PH Bart Schultz agreed to do research progress on basin plans in Europe.

7. Since water scarcity and drought are important issues for Europe, so it was agreed that ERWG need to look into these issues. Members recalled that there used to be Work Teams in ERWG which also include drought and floods. Group requested previous ERWG Chair VPH Hayde to locate the original documents in this regard. Member from Italy proposed to make a suggestion based on the past activities and plans about possible ERWG contribution to agricultural drought management.

8. Member from Italy explained about their experiences to analyse climate change impacts to droughts and providing instructions to farmers on how to adapt their irrigation schemes to climate change. Please see the following link, <https://climate.copernicus.eu/news-and-media/press-room/press-releases/climate-proof-irrigation-strategies-save-crops-italy>, for more information.

ERWG Minutes Item 4: Links with regional and trans-national organizations for co-operation

9. The WG considered the list (Annex 3 Agenda page # 69-70) and noted that it is quite outdated, with some organizations no longer operational. The ERWG requested its members/NCs to review and update the list, including the provision of the information of specific people to contact in each organisation. Engagement with these organizations will be sought when organizing ICID meetings in Europe to expand potential participation.

10. AFEID informed the cooperation between AFEID and the European Irrigation Association as well as with the French Development Agency that contributes resources for the sustainable operation of AFEID also.

ERWG Minutes Item 5: Activities of Focus Groups of ERWG

11. ERWG discussed the issue of Focus Groups and noted that ERWG members are actively continuing their participation in the activities of the relevant working groups. VP Prof. Charlotte de Fraiture (The Netherlands) confirmed that WG-ENV held two workshops in Chiang Mai (Thailand) and they propose to hold a workshop as well as a training session for Young professional in Canada.

12. It was noted that the WG Irrigation and Drainage in the States under Socio-economic Transformation (WG-IDSST) and the Young Professionals e-Forum (IYPeF) were scheduled at the same time as the ERWG. This time conflict meant the ERWG Vice-Chair Peter Kovalenko and representatives of the YPs were not able to participate fully in the ERWG sessions. WG Chair requested ICID CO to look into the matter so that overlap is avoided as far as possible.

ERWG Minutes Item 6: Revitalization of ICID Network

13. The ERWG discussed and stressed need for revitalisation of ICID network in Europe. The members felt that the current structure of the conferences and meetings may not be very interesting for European scientists to participate. ERWG deliberated on alternate structures that could be considered for future events organized in the European region.

14. The members highlighted that the balance of focus and/or influence in Europe has shifted from engineering to environmental led decision making. Similarly, the structure and focus of development cooperation from European member countries to other ICID regions has evolved over time. These changes has weakened the interest of professionals, and their employers, in the activities of ICID. Members stressed to find ways to strengthen the ICID brand in Europe to ensure that the organization remains relevant in these changed operational environments.

15. As an option, the ERWG discussed the potential to organize common European meetings with ICOLD and similar organizations as a means to expand potential participation from Europe in ICID events and working groups.

16. To strengthen the role of ICID members in Europe the ERWG discussed the potential of its members engaging in joint projects financed through EU. The ICID ERWG network could participate in EU project activities to create and facilitate dissemination of project outputs through seminars and workshops and participation on advisory boards. It was proposed that ERWG members should engage in discussions with EU about their funding opportunities. Dr. Röttcher (Germany), Dr. Hayde (Hungary) and Mr. Puu (Estonia) agreed to identify key contacts in the EU by the end of 2017 for discussion during the proposed web meeting of the group in late January 2018.

17. Mr. Verta (Finland) proposed to look into possibilities of ERWG contributing to the China-Europe Water Partnership (CEWP) activities in the coming years and emphasized to make a specific effort to engage with the persons working for Water and Rural Development of the CEWP Partnership Instrument project.

ERWG Minutes Item 7: Dissemination of activities of WG

18. The ERWG noted that some of the organizations that are in the ERWG network (Annex 3 of ERWG agenda page 69) publish their own magazines, in addition to independent magazines, which may be considered as vehicles for dissemination of information about ERWG and ICID activities to a wider audience. The members of ERWG were requested to provide information about possible magazines, including contact information for editors of these publications, by end of December which would then be shared with the Central Office for further follow up. It was agreed that initially short press releases about ERWG and general ICID activities may be sent to these relevant contacts in order to further expand the reach of the ERWG. It was also agreed to create emailing list for ERWG to disseminate information better.

ERWG Minutes Item 7.1: Website of the Group

19. Members discussed issue of updation of the web site of the group and suggested that Young professionals can be requested to manage the website. VPH Laszlo Hayde agreed to update information from the ERWG 20th anniversary to the website while PH Peter Lee agreed to look at the contents of the website to suggest on possible updates.

20. Mr. Mika Turunen had provided a written comments related to the potential engagement of YPs in ICID in general and the ERWG specifically. The unfortunate clash of schedules with the YP session in Mexico prevented his participation in the ERWG discussions. After the meeting, Chair ERWG requested VPH Lee, to explore in collaboration with Mr. Mika. for involvement of YPs in updating and maintaining the ERWG web site and other communication tools.

ERWG Minutes Item 7.2: Webinar / Web-based Seminar

21. The ERWG in general support the suggestion of organizing webinars to promote sharing of vast expertise available with ICID fraternity. Mr. Dominique Rollin (France) was requested to explore whether AFEID would be able to present a webinar on recent work on French irrigation equipment and testing using ICID performance indicators, who agreed to discuss the possibility with AFEID and inform the central office if they are able to arrange it.

ERWG Minutes Item 8: Any other business

22. It was agreed to have regular web meeting by ERWG. Central office will be requested to send out a doodle poll in early December for a meeting to be held in late January or early February to follow-up on the actions agreed in this meeting.



