

Minutes for the Fifteenth Meeting of the  
**EUROPEAN REGIONAL WORKING GROUP (ERWG)**  
 New Delhi, India  
 07 December 2009: 09:30-13:15 hours

**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 Hon. Dr.-Ing. Eiko Luebbe, Chairman (Germany, 2002); (2) Vice President Prof. Dr. Peter Kovalenko, Vice Chairman (Ukraine, 2005); (3) Dr. Laszlo Hayde, Secretary (Hungary, 2005); (4) Vice President Hon. Prof. Dr. Brane Maticic represented by Ms. Marina Pintar (Slovenia, 1996); (5) Vice President Hon. Dr. Ricardo Segura (Spain, 1999); (6) Vice President Hon. Dr. Henri Tardieu represented by Mr. Bernard Vincent (France, 1999); (7) Mr. Jaakko Sierla (Finland, 2001); (8) Mr. Mati Tonismae (Estonia, 2002); (9) Dr. Pol Hakstege represented by Mr. Bert Toussaint (The Netherlands, 2007).

**Observer:** (i) Prof. Dr. Joachim Quast (Germany); (ii) Dr. Klaus Rottcher (Germany); (iii) Dr Heinz Sourell (Germany); (iv) Dr. Sandor Szalai (Hungary); (v) Dr. Ilmar Tupits (Estonia); (vi) Ms. Helena Aijo (Finland); and (vii) Dr. Olga Zhovtonog (Ukraine).

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

**Item 1 : Confirmation of the minutes of the 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Working Group**

The minutes of the 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Working Group held on 7 December 2008 at Lahore (Pakistan) were confirmed.

An interim meeting was held on 17 May 2009 in Lviv, Ukraine, before the 23<sup>rd</sup> European Regional Conference (2009) on '*Progress in Managing Water for Food and Rural Development*'. Germany, Estonia, Hungary, Spain, The Netherlands, Ukraine and ICID Central Office were represented. The outcome of the meeting has been incorporated in these minutes.

**Item 2 : Review of membership of the Working Group**

The British National Committee of ICID (ICID.UK) has not responded to invitation from Central Office for a fresh nomination for membership in ERWG.

The National Committees of Belgium, Bulgaria, Poland and Slovak Republic have become inactive in the past. The Central Office is in contact (17 February 2009) with these National Committees for their reactivation. The Central Office has also invited (18 March 2009) Albania, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Moldova, Norway and Sweden for fresh ICID membership. In response, Sweden has informed (01 June 2009) the Chairman that they are very interested in the working with ICID but not being able to pay the subscription. Norway showed interest as well, but for the time being they declined the offer of ICID membership. Responses from the others are awaited. The Central Office may continue its efforts in making new members.

**Item 3 : Links with regional and transnational organizations for co-operation**

The Chairman apprised the members on new developments/cooperation especially with regard to EWA (European Water Association), the International Commissions for Protection of the Rivers like Rhine, Danube, and Odra. The ERWG network includes 7 National Water Management Associations (**Annex 1**).

Ongoing contacts have been made with the UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development (Dr. Ardakanian, Bonn in Germany). ICID-UNU co-operation commenced during the year in an activity in Tehran – organized by UNU with cooperation from IRNCID.

The German Water History Association together with GECID received an Iranian technical group from IRNCID in Kassel, Germany, for an extended excursion on water management issues from 8-18 August 2009. This has followed the May 2008 visit of German professors and students to Iran, meeting Iranian students and visiting historical sites. In that tour the ERWG Secretary also participated on behalf of UNESCO-IHE. Dr. Röttcher reported on the great success of this cooperation.

**Item 4 : Feedback on River Basin Management Projects supported by ERWG**

Two projects with German participation were '*Water Management Tasks in the Summer Polders of the Nemunas Lowland*' together with Lithuania and "*Flood Modelling in the Upper Dnister Valley*" together with Ukraine. Prof. Joachim Quast (Germany) informed that these projects have now been finalised and the results would be published in English. The cooperation with both Lithuania and Ukraine will continue.

The co-operation with Ukraine was done within the framework of the joint Ukraine / German UNESCO research project "Transformation Processes in the Dnister Region (Western Ukraine) – Concept Development for Sustainable Land Use". The results of the Dnister project were published as a book, which was presented to the WG. A special symposium on the Dnister Project was held as a part of the ERC2009 at Lviv in Ukraine. The 'Lviv Declaration' (Annex 2 of the Agenda) that emerged at the end of the Conference could provide the basis for further research cooperation.

Upon successful completion of new education and training programs on knowledge for the application of best practices of river basin management by Dr. Laszlo Hayde (*UNESCO-IHE in the Netherlands*) in cooperation with Prof. Istvan Ijjas (former Secretary of ERWG), the Budapest University of Technology, the members were encouraged to contact the ministries in their countries for similar initiatives and explore ideas on further utilization of the available training materials. However, since there was no follow up on this activity it has been decided that this item will be completely deleted from the agenda of the next meeting.

**Item 5 : Dialogue on Water for Food and Environment**

It has been agreed to continue the co-operation among ICID-ERWG, Central and Eastern Europe Global Water Partnership (CEE-GWP) and World Wide Fund of Nature (WWF).

The Chairman asked the members to maintain cooperation with the CEE-GWP and WWF, e.g. invite their attention to participate in the ICID conferences, like the 'Drainage Workshop' held in Helsinki (Finland) and Tallin (Estonia). FINCID invited them but without any success.

ERWG members continued the dialogue on the following topic: the WFD and its implementation through tools of the Common Agriculture Policy in the years 2007-2013. The new Directives can be accessed at following websites:

<[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/wfd\\_newsletter.html](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/wfd_newsletter.html)> or  
<<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/>>

The Chairman apprised the members on the above dialogue.

**Item 6 : European Work Team on Water Related Risk Analysis (EWTWRA)**

The idea of merging of Drought and Flood Work Teams under the frame of Risk Management had been brought (2007) to the fore by Dr. Vermes (Hungary). After detailed discussions on the proposed aims, the WG accepted the idea of merging European Work Team on Drought (EWTDRO) and European Work Team on Floods (EWTFFLO) to create a new Work Team under the name Work Team on Water Related Risk Analysis (EWTWRA).

The WG deliberated on the new mandate of the WT and its membership. It seemed appropriate to consider the impacts of extreme events on agricultural production at situations of water scarcity and inundation and to develop risk mitigation strategies. The importance of the topic(s) was agreed during the discussions held at Lviv Interim meeting. Dr. Sandor SZALAI (Hungary) has been requested to invite National Committees to nominate members to the WT. He is also expected to provide an initial work plan (considering proposals from ITALCID, HUCID and GECID) for the activities of the WT and circulate it in early 2010.

**Item 7 : ERWG Work Team on EU Water Framework Directive (EWTWFD)**

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Although this work team has been very active and prosperous in the past, in the absence of a WT Chairman, the work of EWTWFD could not progress well in the recent years. As time has passed and member countries are heavily involved in the implementation of the EU WFD, the WG decided to skip the Work Team and bring forward this topic in the planned WIKI-based electronic platform (Item 11).

#### **Item 8 : European Work Team on Sustainable Irrigation Management (EWTSIM)**

A document, title "*Irrigation Sector Reform in Central and Eastern European Countries*", based on the project results (Phase I), has been published and distributed as hard copy and CD during the previous meeting of the WG. Vice President Prof. Kovalenko later distributed a new proposal for the Phase II of the project "*Irrigation Sector Reform in Central and Eastern European Countries*", prepared by the Ukrainian National Committee and Prof. Bart Schultz. Because of financial and organisational problems, this work had to be postponed.

Vice President Prof. Kovalenko was in contact with GTZ to raise the awareness of the problems and explore funding opportunities. The new report (incorporating new irrigation technologies, water saving, efficiency, etc.) may serve as a 'manual' for GTZ to raise the awareness. Contacts have also been renewed by the Chairman. GTZ showed interest but still hesitates.

The Chairman apprised the members.

#### **Item 9 : European Work Team on Drainage (EWTDR)**

The future activities of the WT were deliberated and specified during the International Drainage Workshop at Helsinki / Tallinn (2008). The activities will, among others, focus on drained non-chernosem soils in technical and organizational terms.

The Chairman further apprised the members. In the next 10 years drainage will be of more importance in the countries e.g. in Finland, of the region.

#### **Item 10 : Conferences supported by ERWG**

Prof. Joachim Quast (Germany) informed that he chaired a session on irrigation issues during the 2<sup>nd</sup> *International Symposium on Water Management* held during 31 March - 3 April 2009 at Berlin, organised under the umbrella of ICID together with DWA-German Water and Waste Association. He is expected to make the proceedings available to Finland, Hungary, the Netherlands and Ukraine.

- **Feedback from 23<sup>rd</sup> European Regional Conference of ICID, 2009, Ukraine**

The 23<sup>rd</sup> European Regional Conference (ERC) of the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID) was held 18 - 21 May 2009 in Lviv, Ukraine. The theme of the ERC was **'Progress in Managing Water for Food and Rural Development'**. The conference was organized by the Ukraine National Committee of ICID (UKCID) in cooperation with the ICID European Regional Working Group (ERWG). Professionals from Bulgaria, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Iran, The Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russia, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan and Secretary General, ICID participated in the conference. Approximately 50 young professionals have attended and/or made presentations during the meeting.

The members noted the feedback provided by UKCID. "Lviv Declaration" is available at **Annex 2** and was discussed and agreed by the meeting.

- **The French National Committee proposed an European Regional Conference to be held in Orleans, France in December 2010**

After discussions, it was agreed that this will be the 24<sup>th</sup> ERC under the title of "*Groundwater Resource: an Essential Resource to be Saved and Managed*". The organizing committee will soon make available the details of the ERC (*topic, sub-topics, dates and venue*) to the members of ERWG. The draft of the proposal is available at **Annex 3**.

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- **25<sup>th</sup> European Regional Conference of ICID in The Netherlands (2011)**

Although the first flyer was published indicating the ERC in the Netherlands as 24<sup>th</sup> ERC in 2011, but during the meeting the French National Committee proposed to host another ERC in 2010. In view of new proposal from French National Committee, it was decided to call the French ERC as 24<sup>th</sup> ERC in 2010 and the Dutch ERC as 25<sup>th</sup> ERC in 2011. The 25<sup>th</sup> European Regional Conference of ICID will be held during 16-20 May 2011 at Groningen in The Netherlands. The details of the 25<sup>th</sup> ERC are available at **Annex 4**. Cooperation with the Working Group on Sustainable Development of Tidal Areas (WG-SDTA) and Working Group on Comprehensive Approaches to Flood Management (WG-CAFM) was initiated by NETHCID. The NETHCID representative apprised the members on the organizational details of the 25<sup>th</sup> ERC.

- **Conference on Sustainable Agriculture Engineering, 5-8 November 2009, Sofia, Bulgaria**

The Central Office publicized this event through its website and News Update. The members took note of the event.

**Item 11 : ERWG Letter Editorial Board**

The Editorial Board for the ERWG Letter consists of Dr. Frantisek Dolezal, Dr.-Ing. Eiko Luebbe (Editor), Chairman of GECID and ERWG, Prof. Dr.-Ing. Joachim Quast, Secretary of GECID, Prof. Dr. Lajos Szlavik and Dr. Henri Tardieu, President of AFEID.

ERWG Letter 19 (2009) has been published (May 2009) and circulated. Copies of earlier letters can be viewed at <<http://www.erwg.icidonline.org>>. Some hardcopies of earlier issues are still available with the Chair and can be ordered from GECID (E-mail: [gecid@zalf.de](mailto:gecid@zalf.de)). The next letter is planned to be published after Easter 2010. Contributions are welcome and should be sent to the Chair at the above e-mail address.

The role of the ERWG Letter for the exchange of information among ERWG members and the possible use of an internet (WIKI-based) information platform will be explored.

**Item 12 : Young Professional Fora and IPTRID in Europe**

The response of Young Professionals at European Regional Conferences (ERC) of ICID is always overwhelming. A Young Professional Forum was conducted during the 23<sup>rd</sup> European Regional Conference at Lviv. Efforts were successfully made to raise funds to support the Young Professionals who were involved in the joint UNESCO German - Ukrainian project on the development of the Dnister region from German Ministry of Research and Education.

It has been recommended to the organizers of the coming Regional Conferences to follow the practice.

**Item 13 : Any other business**

ERWG members were informed in Lviv that the founder and first president of the Hungarian National Committee of ICID (HUCID), Prof. Emil Mosonyi, VPH has recently passed away at the age of 99.

Besides carrying many other important positions, from 1965, he has been Professor of the Technical University of Karlsruhe, Director of the Theodor Rehbock Laboratory in Germany, from 1984 Professor emeritus.

- **Ambientalia Special Issue "Ten Years of the Water Framework Directive: an overview of multiple disciplines" – Call for Papers**

The ICID Central Office circulated (09 November 2009) the above 'Call for Papers' among the ICID National Committees in Europe, Aral Sea Basin Countries and Egypt and Turkey for their contributions.

Ambientalia is a multidisciplinary scientific journal aimed at providing with a platform for the exchange and debate in the field of environmental sciences and applications. Ambientalia Special Issue Series (<http://revista.ambientalia.org/>) is aimed at producing multidisciplinary compilations of environmental research on selected relevant topics. Responses are awaited.

The Chairman announced that during the next meeting in 2010, a new Chairman will be elected. Proposals were welcomed.

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**EUROPEAN REGIONAL WORKING GROUP (ERWG) OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON IRRIGATION AND DRAINAGE (ICID)**

**Profile**

The European Regional Working Group (ERWG) of ICID was founded at the 46<sup>th</sup> IEC Meeting in Rome in September 1995, and is acting under the motto “Comprehensive land and water management in European river basins for the sustainable development of the rural landscape”. The tasks of ERWG can be summarized as follows:

- Knowledge transfer and exchange of experience in matters of border crossing water and land management in European countries
- Co-operation of experts and organisations engaged in national, supranational and international objectives of water management and irrigated agriculture
- Development and promotion of border crossing projects and conferences
- Members are the ICID National Committees of 24 European countries, as below :

<b>Country Representatives</b>			
<b>Austria</b>	Mr. Frederick M. Cate	<b>Lithuania</b>	Dr. Antanas Maziliauskas
<b>Croatia</b>	Dr. Davor Romic	<b>Macedonia</b>	Prof. Zvonimir Vukelic
<b>Cyprus</b>	Mr. Nicos Tsiourtis	<b>Portugal</b>	Mr. Pedro Eduardo da Cunha Serra
<b>Czech Republic</b>	Prof. Svatopluk Matula	<b>Romania</b>	Prof. Ion M. Nicolaescu
<b>Estonia</b>	Mr. Mati Tonismae	<b>Russia</b>	Dr. Irina G. Pankova
<b>Finland</b>	Mr. Jaakko Sierla	<b>Serbia-Montenegro</b>	Mr. Peter Pantelic
<b>France</b>	Dr. Henri Tardieu	<b>Slovenia</b>	Prof. Brane Maticic
<b>Germany</b>	Dr.- Ing. Eiko Luebbe	<b>Spain</b>	Mr. Ricardo Segura Graino
<b>Greece</b>	Prof. Dr. A. Poulouvassilis	<b>Switzerland</b>	Mr. Claude Alain Vullier
<b>Hungary</b>	Dr. Laszlo Hayde	<b>The Netherlands</b>	Dr. Pol Hakstege
<b>Ireland</b>	Dr. John Martin	<b>Ukraine</b>	Prof. Peter Kovalenko
<b>Italy</b>	Dr. Michele A. Cuccaro	<b>United Kingdom</b>	---

**Chairman** : Dr.-Ing. Eiko Luebbe (Germany)  
**Vice-Chairman** : Prof. Dr. Peter Kovalenko (Ukraine)  
**Secretary** : Dr. Laszlo Hayde (Hungary)  
**Observer** : Mr. Mohammed Benblidia (IME)

**Countries with observer status**

*Bosnia & Herzegovina* : Prof. Dr. Mihovil Vlahinic  
*Moldova* : Mr. Valeriu Catrinescu  
*Serbia* : Prof. Dr. Svetimir Dragovic

**Subordinate Work Teams**

**European Work Team on Water Related Risk Analysis (EWTWRA)**

**Chairman** : To be elected (Dr. Sandor Szalai, Hungary)  
**Members** : To be elected

***European Work Team on Sustainable Irrigation Management (EWTSIM)***

<b>Chairman</b>	Prof. Peter Kovalenko (Ukraine)
<b>Members</b>	Mrs. Helena Aijo (Finland) Mr. Frederick M. Cate (Austria) Mr. Jan Cermak (Czech Republic) Mr. Eugeny Goussenkov (Russia) Mrs. Jasmina Taseva (Macedonia) Prof. Dr.-Ing. Joachim Quast (Germany) Dr. Olga Zhovtonog, Secretary (Ukraine) Mrs. Yldiko Zima Szaloki (Hungary)
<b>Observer</b>	World Bank representative

***European Work Team on Drainage (EWTDR)***

<b>Chairman</b>	Dr. Georgiy G. Gulyuk (Russia)
<b>Members</b>	Dr. Irene Bondarik, Secretary (Russia) Prof. Brane Maticic (Slovenia) Dr. Iulian Mihnea (Romania) Mr. Toomas Timmusk (Estonia) Dr. Willem Vlotman (Australia) Mrs. Marija Vukelic-Sutoska (Macedonia) Dr. Nicola Yacik (Ukraine) Mr. Daniel Zimmer (France)

***Editorial Board of ERWG Letter (EBLET)***

<b>Editor</b>	Dr.-Ing. Eiko Luebbe (Germany)
<b>Secretary</b>	Prof. Dr.-Ing. Joachim Quast
<b>Members</b>	Dr. Frantisek Dolezal (Czech Republic) Mr. John Hennessy (UK) Dr. Lajos Szlávik (Hungary) Mr. Henri Tardieu (France)

***Water Network***

In addition to the European National Committees of ICID, the following organizations/association/institution have been incorporated in the ERWG Water Network :

***5 European professional organizations***

- CIPR - Commission Internationale pour la Protection du Rhin
- EurAgEng - Special Interest Group on Soil and Water, European Society of Agricultural Engineers
- EWA - European Water Association
- EWRA - European Water Resources Association
- TECHWARE - Technology for Water Resources

***7 National Water Management Associations***

- BSHE - Bulgarian Society of Hydraulic Engineers
  - DWA - German Association for Water Management, Waste Water and Waste
  - DONBH - Society for Irrigation and Drainage of Bosnia & Herzegovina
  - LZHS - Lithuanian Association of Land and Water Management Engineers
  - MHT - Hungarian Hydrological Society
  - RSRE - Russian Society of Reclamation Engineers
  - SITWM - Polish Association for Water Plant Construction and Land Improvement Engineers and Technicians
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## **6 European Water Management Institutes**

- ACVAPROJECT - Water Management Design Institute (Moldova Republic)
- DHI - Danish Hydraulic Institute
- IIDS - Institute of Irrigation and Development Studies, University of Southampton (United Kingdom)
- RIIDHE - Research Institute for Irrigation, Drainage and Hydraulic Engineering (Bulgaria)
- VITUKI - Water Resources Research Centre Plc. (Hungary)
- IME - Institut Méditerranéen de l'Eau (France)

### **Work Results**

- ERWG Letter No. 1 to 19 (newsletters)
- European Sector Vision on Water for Food and Rural Development (report)
- ICID Guide "How to work out a drought mitigation strategy" (guideline)
- Water Resources Management in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Slovenia (book)
- Diffuse Entries in Rivers of the Odra Basin (research report)
- Proceedings of several European conferences
- First and Second CEE WFE Dialogue Reports (Dialogue on Water, Food and Environment – Dialogue on the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive in Agriculture in the Central and East European Countries) (reports)
- Danube Valley : History of Irrigation, Drainage and Flood Control (book)

### **Current Projects**

- Flood risk mitigation by agricultural non-structural measures
  - Drought mitigation strategies
  - Flood prevention strategies
  - Dialogue on water for food and environmental security in Central and Eastern Europe
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**FEEDBACK FROM 23<sup>RD</sup> EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF ICID, 2009, UKRAINE  
'LVIV DECLARATION'**

The 23<sup>rd</sup> European Regional Conference (ERC) of the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID) was held during 18 - 21 May 2009 at Lviv, Ukraine. The theme of the ERC was **'Progress in Managing Water for Food and Rural Development'**. The conference was organized by the Ukraine National Committee of ICID (UKCID) in cooperation with the ICID European Regional Working Group (ERWG). Professionals from Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Iran, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russia, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan, and ICID participated in the conference and discussed the various keynotes and papers.

The Conference placed high emphasis on the issues related to flood control, water demands, GIS technologies and application in the field of water management. The special theme was dedicated to the climate change in view of frequent floods and droughts observed in Europe. Special attention was given to the development of management plans for river basins.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> European Regional Conference concluded with following Declaration/Recommendation:

1. The conference papers highlighted the good 'on-going' development with respect to integrated management of water and land resources both with respect to policy related developments (stakeholder participation, actual implementation, modeling, data collection, and storage) and their dissemination.
2. More and more projects were being developed and implemented in an integrated way by taking into account social conditions with stakeholder participation. Possible impacts of climate change including technical, economical, gender, and environmental aspects are getting addressed. However, more need to be done to improve these aspects. This will be especially important during the operation and maintenance phase of rural development projects. It is in this phase that the benefits of projects are really realized.
3. Primarily due to human activities and to a certain extent due to the impacts of climate change, the effects and impacts of floods and droughts are significantly increasing in many places. Therefore, it is increasingly important that in the development of projects, both the present day conditions as well as the envisaged mid-term and long-term scenarios are taken into account in the decision-making process. In the light of this, the European Water Framework Directive and the European Flood Directive are important guiding documents that have to be implemented jointly.
4. For improved coordination of the wide range of activities for rural development at different spatial levels, like integrated land and water management, river basin management, rural development and spatial planning, it is recommended to update legislation and organizational structures where relevant.
5. There is an urgent need to strengthen international water legislation for protection of water rights for agriculture in order to support sustainable and integrated water management - irrigation and/or drainage, dependent on the local conditions - as a requirement to guarantee food security.

The conference recorded its appreciation to the activities of the Inter-state Coordination Water Commission of Central Asia in the framework of cooperation of the five states - Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Kirgizstan - on trans-boundary waters under the conditions of climate change and felt that it could be an example for the trans-boundary cooperation in other river basins.

The conference also supported the development of a Russian speaking network of water management specialists that was initiated in the Moscow meeting of January 2009 and recommends that scientific organizations join the network.

**Agreed actions**

- To increase food production significantly, through sustainable rural development in the forthcoming decades by realizing the potential of several of the European countries, like Ukraine, it was agreed (*by several parties*) that an initiative will be taken for a joint project on *'Integrated Water Management'* for improving food production in European countries. The ICID European Working Group will take the initiative to prepare a proposal in cooperation with the potential partners.

- To improve the network for European young professionals in the water management sector to be initiated jointly by UKCID and GECID. They will also promote joint activities like research projects, exchanges, summer schools, etc.
- To review and further develop the activities of Work Team on Sustainable Irrigation Management (WT-SIM) in light of integrated rural development.

Lviv, Ukraine  
21 May 2009

Acknowledgement : VP Peter Kovalenko, UKCID  
VP Eiko Lübbe  
Chair, ERWG

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"Gérer l'eau pour une agriculture durable"

**ASSOCIATION FRANÇAISE POUR L'EAU  
L'IRRIGATION ET LE DRAINAGE**  
**FRENCH COMMITTEE OF THE INTERNATIONAL  
COMMISSION ON IRRIGATION AND DRAINAGE (ICID)**

**DRAFT**

**24<sup>TH</sup> EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE  
"GROUNDWATER RESOURCE: AN ESSENTIAL RESOURCE TO BE SAVED AND MANAGED"  
December 2010, Orleans in France**

Groundwater is the main source of freshwater for the planet. According to UNESCO (2003), it provides more than 50% of the world's drinking water, 40% of the industrial demand and 20% of the agricultural uses. Groundwater presents many characteristics which makes it more attractive than surface water: a better chemical and bacteriological quality, an opportunity for on demand individual use without heavy investment in collective infrastructure a cost-free storage capacity.

The low setup and operation costs of drilling and pumping equipment, but also the weaknesses of regulations on groundwater have been the reasons for a considerable expansion of the use of groundwater worldwide over the past 40 years. But, unlike surface water, groundwater is not easily measurable and manageable for three main reasons. First, in most case it is used by a large number of independent users, including farmers, which have direct access to the water individually; in many regions, most wells are not declared and/or not registered, making their management difficult if not impossible. Second it is an invisible, extremely complex resource, making it very difficult to be understood by users and managers. Finally, the legal and institutional specific arrangements are difficult to implement and enforce. This lack of mechanisms for managing groundwater resource exposes it to the risk of the "tragedy of the commons" described by Hardin (1968) which can lead to its overuse, and consequently to the deterioration of its quality, sometimes irreversible, as it happens with saline intrusion in coastal aquifers.

Experiments on regulatory tools, incentives and enforcements have been conducted for managing groundwater resource in different environments around the world. In Europe the objective of restoring the good ecological status required by the Water Framework Directive (WFD) establishes a regulatory framework urging actors to implement these rules. In more liberal environments such as the United States or Australia, other approaches have been promoted. Finally, in developing countries where the direct control of groundwater is often more difficult to implement, other solutions are explored.

The objective of this European conference is to address the issues of groundwater management in these different environments. The conference will take place in Orleans where a volumetric management has been in use for ten years on one of the largest groundwater aquifers in France, following negotiations between farmers and administration. In collaboration with the ICID European Regional Working Group, other experiences in Europe will also be presented. AFEID will also make contact with ICID National Committees to present experiences in the United States and Australia, as well as in developing countries, namely India (in collaboration with IWMI) and North African countries.

This conference will be placed in the perspective of the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum Marseille 2012.

**DRAFT PROPOSAL**  
**25<sup>TH</sup> EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE**  
**“INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT FOR MULTIPLE LAND USE IN FLAT COASTAL AREAS”**  
**16-20 May 2011, Groningen, The Netherlands**

**Subtitle: “Water management for sustainable land use in tidal zones”**

**Background**

Within the Netherlands National Committee of the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (NETHCID) the idea to organize an ICID Regional European Conference on **“Integrated water management under multiple land use in flat coastal areas”** was discussed in Sacramento, USA during the ICID meetings in October 2007 and further elaborated resulting in this draft proposal.

**Scope**

The reason for this initiative is the increasing importance of coastal areas for integrated water management for multiple land use, such as agricultural food production and the increasing vulnerability of especially tidal areas, deltas and estuaries due to increase in population density and value of public and private property, subsidence and effects of climate change. In these geographical areas water management and where applicable flood protection for land use is related to many issues, such as flood risk management, land reclamation, rural reconstruction, salt water intrusion and habitat development. Also the institutional settings of organisations of water management are important aspects. In Europe the question how to deal with the complex requirements when following the various relevant European Directives is an example of this last issue. Flat coastal areas are widespread in Europe, so for most European (ICID member) countries the conference will be relevant, as well as for other countries with large coastal areas. Exchange of lessons learned can be very helpful to cope with future challenges and develop sustainable and cost-effective approaches for water management and flood protection on behalf of integrated development and management of land use in flat coastal areas.

**Issues and themes**

The focus is on integrated approaches towards water management and land use in (manmade) flat coastal areas in Europe, in relation to coastal zone management. The core issue is on water management and flood protection in such areas with respect to land use. Consequently, urbanisation as such is not suggested as central theme. Possible themes to be discussed and elaborated are:

- Main theme: Integrated water management for multiple land use in flat coastal areas;

**Topic I.** Integrated water management;

- Flood risk management in flat coastal areas under the influence of changing storm surges, subsidence and impacts of climatic changes in land use;
- Role of ecology and habitats in water management and flood protection
- Water management under multiple land use;

**Topic II.** Challenges and opportunities of salt-water intrusion

- Tidal water management e.g. Venice, Italy; St. Petersburg, Russia; Haringvliet, the Netherlands
  - Fresh water/saline water interactions in coastal areas and consequences for ecology and water quality
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**Topic III.** Role of European legislation, directives, in the development and management of flat coastal areas

- Institutional arrangements for water management and flood protection, such as water boards, and the role of governments, provinces, communities and civil society organisations e.g. in the framework of ICZM(Integrated Coastal Zone Management);
- Legal arrangements, such as the European water Frame Work Directive.

**Topic IV.** Societal and economic aspects such as cost-benefit analyses of possible measures.

- Historical perspective of developments in flat coastal areas

### **Further Steps**

The proposal will be further elaborated in cooperation with members of the ICID Working Groups on Sustainable Development of Tidal Areas, on comprehensive Approaches to Flood Management and the European Regional Working Group. We propose to organize the meeting as the 24th ICID European Regional Conference in 2011. The chairman of the European Regional Working Group supports the idea and has suggested considering an organization by the NETHCID with contributions by the German National ICID Committee (GECID). This is appropriate, as both in the Netherlands and Germany extensive experience has been gained on the items of the proposed conference. Groningen in the northeast of the Netherlands is the preferred location, because it is as an accessible town in the coastal area of the Netherlands, not far from the German coast.

This proposal was accepted and the venue was approved at the ICID Congress in Lahore, Pakistan, October 2008. As a helpful precursor for the preparation of the proposed European Regional Conference an informal workshop could be held during the ICID Asian Regional Conference in Yogyakarta, Indonesia in 2010. There, appealing responses might be expected from member countries within Europe, but hopefully from outside Europe as well, such as Korea (coastal areas), India (Kerala and other coastal lowlands), Japan, Bangladesh and Australia (lower Murray- Darling basin).

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