The plenary session of the 23rd ICID International Congress on Irrigation and Drainage was held with the opening speech by Engineer Marco Antonio Parra Cota from National Water Commission, who welcomed the attendees to the Congress; during his address to the plenary session, which initiated the Works of the Congress. Engineer Marco Antonio Parra Cota highlighted the importance of ICID, as an organization for exchange of knowledge and the spread of technologies and current policies in the field of irrigation, underscored that this event is hosted once again in Mexico 50 years after the first time it was hosted in the country, and that for the opening ceremony on October 9th, will be attending the President of the Mexican Republic, Lic. Enrique Peña Nieto. He wished success to the
attendees of the congress in the development of the works in the forthcoming days reaching the objectives set for it. Dr. Saeed Nairizi, president of ICID, was pleased with the opportunity of holding this congress in Mexico, since it is a country with a long path in irrigation for food production, will enable the exchange of knowledge amongst all participants of the different countries, member of the ICID. In the same meeting, it was read the 10th N.D. Gulhati memorial lecture, this memorial lecture takes place at every Irrigation and Drainage ICID congress, aims to spread knowledge on developments relevant to irrigation and drainage at a worldwide level, including those related to the environment, economy, among others. For this year, the lecture was appointed by Dr. Felipe Ignacio Arreguín Cortés, General Director of the Mexican Water Technology Institute (IMTA) and its paper was about the mexican experience on reforms in the administration of irrigation systems. The general rapporteurs for the thematic questions of the Congress, Dr. Gao Zhanyi, for question 60 and Mr. Ding Kunlun for question 61, presented the general results of the papers that will be presented during the technical sessions, which will be enriched with the discussion during the working technical sessions of the Congress. Finally, Mr Avinash C. Tyagi talked about the objectives of the Congress and wished the best of successes in the development of the works.

Preserving the memory of the visionary Water Resource Engineer, ICID, in collaboration with Gulhati Trust has been organizing the “N.D. Gulhati Memorial Lecture for International Cooperation in Irrigation and Drainage” at the time of its triennial Congresses. The memorial lecture aims at encouraging exchange of significant global developments relevant to irrigation and drainage engineering including all allied aspects like environment, sociology, economies, etc. and fostering and enhancing international cooperation to meet ICID objectives. The lecture is delivered by an invited eminent person in a field related to ICID’s mission.

This year the “N. D. Gulhati Memorial Lecture” was given to Dr. Felipe Ignacio Arreguín Cortés General Director of the Mexican Institute of Water Technology Dr. Arreguín presented the paper “Reforms in the Administration of Irrigation Systems: Mexican Experiences”. a brief description of the process and impact of the transfer of the infrastructure, management and operation to Water Users Associations.

The paper started with an overview of the present and future conditions of the hydro-agriculture sector in the country, and goes on to discuss the social background and the legal framework under which the transfer process was planned and carried out, highlighting the participation and the organizational framework adopted by the user, which not only remains in force, but has been consolidated, giving rise to a social organization that constitutes an example nationwide. It also underscores the linkage that has been established between different government agencies and user associations for the sustainable development of the hydro-agricultural sector, with a series of programs for the rehabilitation and conservation of hydraulic infrastructure and to the efficient use and management of water, with the purpose of increasing agricultural production per unit area and the volume of water used. Remarks a series of major challenges, problems and opportunities that need to be addressed in order to meet the current and growing for demand prevailing in the country, as in the importance of the role of technological research and development institutions within this frame of reference.
SYMPOSIUM ON “GLOBAL REVIEW OF INSTITUTIONAL REFORM IN IRRIGATION SECTOR FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE WATER MANAGEMENT, INCLUDING WUA”

At the Tolteca room was held the symposium on “Global Review of Institutional Reform in Irrigation Sector for Sustainable Agriculture Water Management, including WUA”, with the participation of speakers from 14 counties, including Mexico. The symposium was conducted by Dr. Hafied Gany of Indonesia, with about 150 attendees. The objective of the symposium was to share knowledge and experiences related to the sustainable agriculture water management with special focus on organizational and legal reforms of the sector, participatory management with water users’ organizations and other stakeholders. There were presented the cases of Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Nepal, Sudan, China Taipei, Turkey and Ukraine. Each country presented its legal framework, the transfer process to users and participatory management, with its impacts, challenges and recommendations. From the papers presented, it has been observed that each country has a variety of institutional and organizational arrangements for irrigation and drainage development and management. In the session it was concluded the necessity to adapt the legal framework to consolidate the management transfer process to water users, the challenge to supply food to approximately 9 billion inhabitants in the future, actions aimed to increase the productivity of water used for irrigation, since the agricultural border is close to its physical limit. It is necessary to seek for new participation schemes for public private partnership. Finally it is suggested to consider the user profiles and surrounding environment, in the reform of the legal framework.

WORKSHOP ABOUT THE USE OF GEOSYNTHETICS IN IRRIGATED AGRICULTURE

A workshop about the USE OF GEOSYNTHETICS IN IRRIGATED AGRICULTURE, organized by the International Geosynthetics Society (IGS), was celebrated on October 8 at Mixteca II Room in in the framework of ICID Meeting. The IGS is a non-profit organization created in 1983 at the initiative of prof. Giroud, member the US Academy of Engineering, to promote the development and application of geosynthetics. IGS has now over 4000 members and over 160 corporate members. Timothy D. Stark was the chairman of this workshop with six speakers as Prof. Giroud, who converted a trial-and error technology into an engineering discipline. Another speaker was Mr. Plusquellec, who is a long-term member of ICID and a member of IGS. He started experimenting with geomembranes in 1964. He is well known within ICID for his efforts to promote advanced but well proven techniques in water control through a number of publications and training workshops. He is the author of an ICID publication on the Use of Geosynthetics in irrigation and drainage. Several topics was covered in the workshops, such as applications of geomembranes for irrigation canals, reservoirs, flood management, water containment, water conveyance, erosion control, and irrigation drainage.
QUESTIONS SESSIONS

QUESTION 60.1

Striving to find effective solutions to water crisis and food security challenges around the world, the 23rd ICID International Congress on Irrigation and Drainage has orderly discussed specific issues, such as question 60.1 on “Emerging issues and challenges of water saving”, including “the impact of transferring water out of agriculture.”

In the session, three papers touched on this topic. We need to be aware that even the world’s best technologies will be useless and ineffective if farmers do not accept these new technologies or lack the most basic training and skills. Saving water is the responsibility of different agents, from the crop producers to the consumers. Regional and local investments need then to be considered.

QUESTION 61.1

In relation with Congress Question 61.1 – Adopting precision irrigation and improving surface irrigation to combat water scarcity. A presentation of Summary Report of Q 61.1 was presented by Dr. Brain Wahlin. A review and classification of the 25 papers, was presented, classified them in 9 of precision irrigation, 13 of improving surface irrigation and 3 papers that attend both of the aforementioned aspects. In the journey was presented three oral presentations: a) A new modeling system MSSI for surface irrigation design and management by Shaohui Zhang et al., from China, in that paper, is presented a numerical model that can simulate basin irrigation, single furrow irrigation and furrow network, basically, made use of the Saint-Venant equations, the shallow water equations, b) Analysis of the technology for precision surface irrigation by Bai M. J. et al., from China, in wich is presented an approach for precision irrigation based in four aspects, precision land leveling, optimal system design, precise process control and accurate performance evaluation, and c) Effects of surface irrigation efficiency improvement on water resources system indices by Narges Zohrabi et al., from Iran, in which is presented a panorama of surface irrigation in Iran, and the application process of WEAP model in order to make an analysis of vulnerability and reliability indices, that permit to conclude conditions related with short-time and long-time application of Improvement of surface irrigation over the water resources indices aforementioned.
QUESTION 61.3

In this session three papers were orally presented, including that one of chairman Mr. Franklin Dimick, from the US. Co-chairman, Ignacio Sanchez Cohen, from Mexico, talked about the abstracts received at the ICID.

Special emphasis was made on the need of subsidizing technology transfer to irrigation users in order to improve irrigation efficiency. Also, we must consider end users in the planning processes for technology development.

The speakers dealt with the evaluation and perspective of ancient technology in Asia and the evaluation of modern irrigation infrastructures by means of modeling schemes.

At the end of the session many members of the audience intervened to point at the urgent need of adequate and precise technology transference, the need of technology subsidy claiming that access to technology should be considered a human right. This session will continue today at the TOLTECA II room.

LATIN AMERICAN MEETING

The Latin-American and the Caribbean meeting on Irrigation and Drainage will take place on Wednesday, October 10th at the TOLTECA 1 meeting room starting at 9 am. Experts from eight countries of Latin-America and the Caribbean will be participating, namely: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Peru, Dominican Republic and Costa Rica.

The purpose of the meeting is to encourage the discussion and cooperation amongst the different countries of Latin-America and the Caribbean on the different aspects of Irrigation and Drainage Management; to exchange experiences, to create networks of knowledge and to disseminate relevant information. The National Water Commission of Mexico and the Mexican Institute of Water Technology are the organizers of this meeting between public officers and members of the Academia from Latin-America and the Caribbean.
Welcome dinner