

# CAPACITYPOOL

## SHARING WATERS

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# UNW-DPC



## Foreword

Like this year's World Water Day and World Water Forum, this edition of the Capacity Pool is dedicated to the important issue of transboundary basins. UNW-DPC has been actively working in this field since the international workshop, co-organized by UNW-DPC and UNESCO-IHP on "Institutional Capacity Development in Transboundary Basins" was held in Bonn, Germany in November 2008. The workshop set out to collect and discuss success stories and examples of best practices that have led to the development of institutional capacity supporting effective transboundary water management. The ultimate aim being to provide future recommendations for required institutional arrangements and an assessment of needs for capacity development in this field. A summary is presented in this issue of the Capacity Pool, along with an interview with Dr Andras Szöllösi-Nagy, Director of UNESCO-IHP and co-organizer of the workshop, who outlines the activities of UNESCO-IHP in the field of transboundary waters. The results of the institutional capacity development workshop have been published as part of the UNW-DPC publication series, and in a Side Publication to the Third World Water Development Report, also in cooperation with WWAP, to provide a wider audience for the results of the workshop.

Let me take this opportunity to say a few words about the UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development (UNW-DPC). The broad mission of the UNW-DPC is to enhance the credibility, coherence and integrated effectiveness of the capacity development activities of UN-Water. By doing so, it intends to strengthen the efforts of the members and partners of UN-Water in their quest to support Member States to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) related to water. UNW-DPC supports individual, organizational and institutional capacity development activities as well as contributing to the development of the strategic future of water-related capacity development. UNW-DPC, based in Bonn, Germany, is funded by the German Federal Government and hosted by the United Nations University. As this Capacity Pool will be published in time for the 5<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum and is therefore aimed at a larger audience, it also includes an introduction to UNW-DPC, as well as a review of UNW-DPC activities in 2008 and an outlook to 2009.

I wish you a good read.

Reza Ardakanian  
*Founding Director of UNW-DPC*

# Introduction to UNW-DPC

“Adding value in water-related capacity development”

## Who are we?

The UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development (UNW-DPC) is a joint programme of UN Agencies and Programmes cooperating within the framework of UN-Water. UNW-DPC supports UN-Water in the field of water-related capacity development. It is funded by the German Federal Government and it is hosted by the United Nations University (UNU) in Bonn, Germany.

### ...what is UN-Water?

UN-Water, an inter-agency mechanism formally established in 2003 by the United Nations High Level Committee on Programmes, has evolved out of a history of close collaboration among UN agencies. UN-Water strengthens coordination and coherence among UN entities dealing with issues related to all aspects of freshwater and sanitation and contributes to the agenda defined by the 2000 Millennium Declaration and the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

## What do we do?

Based on the firm belief that the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) related to water and sanitation is conditional on stakeholders being able to mobilise essential required capacities, UNW-DPC's mission is to enhance the coherence and effectiveness of the capacity development activities of the UN-Water members and partners. By working on the full range of individual, organizational and institutional capacity development, UNW-DPC seeks to strengthen the ability of the UN-Water members and partners to support Member States to achieve these MDGs.

### ... what is capacity development?

We see capacity development as ‘the process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time’ (UNDP 2008).

### ... how do we work?

UNW-DPC works towards supporting the UN-Water members and partners in the following ways. UNW-DPC provides an observatory function

that supports UN-Water in assessing capacity development needs, in mapping the existing capacity development activities and in analyzing capacity development gaps.

UNW-DPC subsequently cooperates with UN-Water members and partners to collate and produce required new knowledge, e.g. by jointly organising expert group meetings and workshops, as well as by compiling publications on cutting edge water-related capacity development issues.

Newly produced knowledge then has to be managed and disseminated. UNW-DPC invests in the design and implementation of knowledge management tools, such as the UNW-DPC repository of capacity development activities, to do so. In addition, UN-Water members and partners are also supported in transferring required knowledge and skills through effective, and often novel, delivery mechanisms involving, for example, e-learning, training of trainers and vocational training.

Finally, an evaluation of the efficacy of the knowledge delivered and the mechanism of delivery is used to adapt our support to meet future developments and needs.

# UNW-DPC News

## UNW-DPC Supported by the Netherlands

Prof. Jan Leentvaar, the former Director Chief Inspector of the Water Management Inspectorate, has joined UNW-DPC in December. Prof. Leentvaar was seconded by the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management in The Hague, the Netherlands for an initial period of three years.

## UNW-DPC Publications

UNW-DPC is creating a publication series with currently four categories of publications: Knowledge, Mapping, Proceedings and Reporting.



The first UNW-DPC publication “*Water-Related Capacity Development: A Survey of UN-Water Members’ and Partners’ Activities*” (Mapping No.1) was published in late 2008.

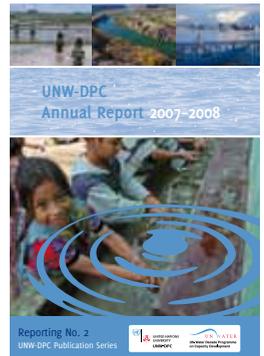
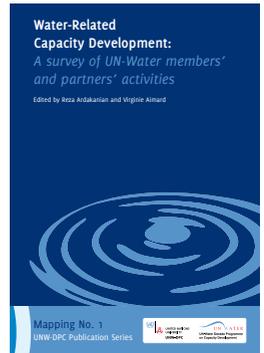
The UNW-DPC “*Annual Report 2007–2008*” (Reporting No. 2) and Proceedings of the Workshop on “*Drinking Water Loss Reduction*” (Proceedings No. 1) were both published early 2009.

The proceedings of the workshop on “*Institutional Capacity Development in Transboundary Basins*” (Proceedings No. 2) will be published in March 2009.

UNW-DPC has also contributed to the Third World Water Development Report (WWDR3) and provided the section on Capacity Development along with UNESCO-IHE. A number of side publications will provide additional information to the WWDR3. One of these will be the UNW-DPC Side Publication, entitled “*Institutional Capacity Development in Transboundary Basins*”.

UNW-DPC has also worked with UNESCO-IHE on compiling a joint publication on “*Knowledge and Capacity Development for Improved Water Management*” representing the state of the art in knowledge and capacity development in the water sector. Both publications will be available at the 5<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum.

All UNW-DPC publications can be downloaded at [www.unwater.unu.edu](http://www.unwater.unu.edu).



# UNW-DPC Activities Calendar

## January

- 22-24 **Journalists Workshop** on *Water and Land* for water and environmental journalists in the Arab Countries with UNCCD and AWC in Cairo, Egypt  
The objective of the workshop is to create awareness among media professionals in Arab countries regarding the current situation of water resources management and land degradation on the region.
- 28-30 **Workshop** on *Improved Agricultural Productivity, Water Efficiency and Strengthening Rural Livelihoods* with UN DESA and UN ESCAP in Bangkok, Thailand  
The objective of the workshop, which will be held in preparation for CSD 17, is to strengthen technical and institutional capacities of key government institutions and policy makers in developing and implementing sustainable agricultural, rural development and irrigation water management policies.

## February

- 18 **Lecture:** “New Challenges in the Dutch Water Sector — Flooding in the Netherlands?” at the Center for Development Research (ZEF) in Bonn, Germany

## March

- 16-22 **Session** 6.1.2 at the 5th World Water Forum *Working together to Support Policy and Legal Reforms for Equitable Water Allocation* with UNESCO-IHE in Istanbul, Turkey
- 16-22 **Sessions** at the 5th World Water Forum under Topic 1.2 *Water-related migration, Changing Land Use and Human Settlements* with UNU-EHS in Istanbul, Turkey
- 30-2 **Session** on *Transboundary Water Management — Successful Cooperation* at the DWA Symposium on Water Resources Management in Berlin, Germany
- 31-2 **Workshop** on *Water and Education as Contribution to the International Conference on Education for Sustainable Development* with UNESCO and BMU in Bonn, Germany  
A special workshop to be held on water in education, demonstrating the linkage between the two international decades, the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) and the International Decade for Action ‘Water for Life’ (2005-2015).

## April

- 20-24 **Training of Trainers Course** *Climate and Water Affairs* for Eastern Europe with WMO in Skopje, FYR Macedonia  
The course offers training to university staff to support universities from south-east Europe to strengthen their capacity to adapt curricula and course material to reflect new knowledge about climate and water affairs that will allow students to develop a cross-sectoral, climate change-aware approach to decision-making within their own disciplines.

## May

- Training Course** on *Integrated Flood Management* with WMO and RCUWM-Tehran in Tehran, Iran  
The course is designated to familiarize participants with the concept of Integrated Flood Management and prepare them to identify possible paths of action towards implementation of the concept in their own field of work.

For more information on these and other upcoming UNW-DPC events, please visit the UNW-DPC website: [www.unwater.unu.edu](http://www.unwater.unu.edu).

# World Water Day 2009



## Shared Waters – Shared Opportunities

Nearly 40 per cent of the world's population lives on transboundary basins, rivers and lake basins shared by two or more countries. The world's 263 transboundary basins include the territory of 145 countries and cover half of the Earth's land surface. Great reservoirs of freshwater also move silently below borders in underground aquifers. There are over 270 unknown transboundary aquifers.



The rising demand for water is nowhere more destabilizing than in transboundary basins. Ensuring that its citizens have the water they need, is a top priority of every country. Even though

the world's supply of freshwater is not evenly distributed and often not appropriately managed, there is still enough water to meet everyone's needs. However, many countries already face an increasing shortage of freshwater, by 2025, 1 800 million people could be living in areas with absolute water scarcity and two-thirds of the world's population could be living under stress conditions caused by water shortage. Rapid population growth and poorly

managed development is often a reason for depleted and degraded freshwater supplies among water-users in many countries. Water which crosses national borders plays an even more complex

and strategic role. Pollution and dams or diversion canals are the main worries for downstream countries.

Records show that disputes over water can be handled diplomatically, despite the complexity of the problem. In the last 50 years only 37 acute disputes have involved violence, whereas 150 treaties have been signed in the same time span. Even though all the agreements and treaties are a great success more needs to be done in the area of transboundary basins. This year's World Water Day (22 March 2009), as well as the 5<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum (16–22 March 2009 in Istanbul, Turkey) are dedicated to the theme of transboundary waters to raise awareness to this important issue. UNW-DPC has dedicated this issue of the Capacity Pool to the same issue to support the efforts of UN-Water and join them in raising awareness.

For more information:  
[www.unwater.org/worldwaterday](http://www.unwater.org/worldwaterday)  
[www.worldwaterforum5.org](http://www.worldwaterforum5.org)



## Looking Back on 2008

UNW-DPC started 2008 with the finalisation of its work plan for UN-Water and with the implementation of the specific activities described in that plan to support and strengthen the capacity development activities of the UN-Water members and partners. After some initial activities towards better coordination of and collaboration on capacity development within UN-Water and the participation of UNW-DPC in various activities, the UNW-DPC work plan 2007–2009 was approved formally by UN-Water at the 8th UN-Water meeting in Rome (January 2008). The office has

grown to its current size during the last twelve months.

Thematic areas touched upon in 2008 were *inter alia* integrated and adaptive water resources management, water supply and sanitation, transboundary water management, surface and groundwater protection and management, gender, urban water management, knowledge management and institutional capacity development.

During this year major contributions included surveying UN-Water members on their capacity development activities,

their support needs, creating an online repository of UN-Water capacity development activities, co-organising innovative knowledge production workshops to collect examples of best practices and success stories in sustainable water resources management, developing contributions to the 3rd World Water Development Report (WWDR3), and producing a WWDR3 side publication and a joint publication on capacity development, while also planning a session on institutional capacity development at the 5th World Water Forum (WWF5).

One main knowledge production event was the international workshop on “**Drinking Water Loss Reduction: Developing Capacity for Applying Solutions**” organised with UN-HABITAT and held in September 2008 in Bonn. The workshop brought together water managers from various cities around the globe confronted with the problem of drinking water losses, who shared their lessons learned on improving leakage control, reducing drinking water losses in water supply systems and capacity development in order to apply best managerial and technical solutions.

In 2008 UNW-DPC also became a member of several **UN-Water Task Forces**, to ensure that it can fully support UN-Water members and partners in bringing more coherence and better coordination of capacity development activities into specific water and sanitation related themes. UNW-DPC is hence currently a full member of the Task Force on Transboundary Waters, the Task Force on

Climate Change, the Task Force on Sanitation, and the Task Force on Gender and Water. Likewise, UNW-DPC is a consultative member of the Task Force on Country-level Coordination and Coherence.

The UNW-DPC and UNESCO international workshop on “**Institutional Capacity Development in Transboundary Basins: Lessons Learned from Practical Experiences**”, organised within the framework of the UN-Water Task Force on Transboundary Waters, was held in Bonn in November 2008. It brought together experts from various transboundary rivers, lakes and aquifers worldwide, to discuss necessary institutional arrangements and related capacity development activities required to improve the effectiveness of transboundary water cooperation.

Similarly, an Expert Group Meeting, on “**Gender-disaggregated Data on Water and Sanitation**”, jointly organised with UN-DESA within the framework of the UN-Water Task Force on Gender and Water, was held in December 2008 in New York, with invited



Participants sharing experiences at the UNW-DPC/UNESCO workshop.



Urban water managers sharing lessons learned on improving leakage control at the UNW-DPC/UN-HABITAT workshop.

international experts on statistics, gender, water supply and sanitation, participating to make recommendations on how to improve the state of gender-disaggregated data on water and sanitation.

UNW-DPC likewise became actively involved in producing, with other UN organisations, several publications linked to the **World Water Development Report 3** (WWDR3) and the 5th World Water Forum. While concentrating on capacity development in all its forms, UNW-DPC, as the programme of UN-Water for the UN Decade “Water for Life” (2005–2015) also began to contribute to the improvement of water issues in primary, secondary and tertiary education, thus representing a natural link between the water decade and the UN “Decade Education for Sustainable Development” (DESD, 2005–2014). Its staff participated actively in the Symposium “Water – Education – Future” as part of the German contribution to this decade.

During the past months UNW-DPC actively networked with UN-Water members and partners in UN-Water meetings and large events such as the 16th session of

the **Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-16)** in New York, the World Urban Forum in Nanjing, China, and the Stockholm World Water Week 2008, and participated in several joint activities. Continuous networking is a major tool for achieving the goals of UNW-DPC and thus for contributing to the achievement of the goals of UN-Water.

Therefore, as the year ended, UNW-DPC was well poised on the regional and global stages to continue the work needed to support UN-Water in achieving the water and sanitation-related **Millennium Development Goals**. UNW-DPC enters 2009 ready to meet the challenge of developing capacities for sustainable water resources management, water supply and sanitation for all.

# UNW-DPC Activities at the 5<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum

5<sup>th</sup> WORLD WATER FORUM  
I S T A N B U L 2 0 0 9



17–18 March 2009

## Topic 1.2 Water-related Migration, Changing Land Use and Human Settlements

Together with the United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS) and the Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration (GAP) in Turkey, UNW-DPC is co-convening four sessions under Topic 1.2 “Water-related Migration, Changing Land Use and Human Settlements”. UNW-DPC will provide inputs and moderated discussions to these four sessions on how strengthening capacities for an efficient use and management of water resources can assist countries to limit and mitigate the impacts of migration and human settlements on these resources.

### Session 1.2.1 Rural-Rural Migration – Imbalances Between Water, Land and People:

The Drivers of Rural Migration

Date: 17 March 2009

Time: 8:30–13:00

Venue: Room 5, Feshane Halic Hall

### Session 1.2.2 Rural-Urban Migration – Rural Migration and Urban Slums:

Dreams Fulfilled or the beginning of a Nightmare?

This session includes a High Level Panel with invited high level experts and authorities.

Date: 17 March 2009

Time: 14:30–19:00

Venue: Room 5, Feshane Halic Hall

### Session 1.2.3 Crossing Borders/Seas – Over Land, Over Seas:

Does Water Accessibility Drive Cross-Border Migration?

Date: 18 March 2009

Time: 8:30–10:30

Venue: Room 5, Feshane Halic Hall

### Plenary Session

Date: 18 March 2009

Time: 11:00–13:00

Venue: Room 5, Feshane Halic Hall

PULL-OUT

**20–21 March 2009**

## **Topic 6.1 Education and Capacity Development Strategies**

As an input into the discussions to be had as part of Topic 6.1, UNW-DPC has worked with UNESCO-IHE on compiling a joint publication “Knowledge and Capacity Development for Improved Water Management”, representing the state of the art in knowledge and capacity development in the water sector. It will be distributed for the first time at the 5th World Water Forum. The publication is set to contain up to 18 chapters from experts within and outside the UN-Water mechanism and will focus on providing a state of the art account of knowledge management and capacity development issues, tools and instruments, and important areas of application. To date, contributing authors come from organizations including UNESCO, UNW-DPC, UNU-INWEH, Asian Development Bank (ADB), National Water and Sewage Corporation of Uganda (NWSC), project WET (Water Education for Teachers), the Office International de l’Eau, Alterra, and the Universities of Osnabrück, Waterloo and Toronto.

### **Session 6.1.0 Opening Session**

Date: 20 March 2009

Time: 8:30–10:30

Venue: Room 6, Feshane Sadabad Hall

### **Session 6.1.2 Institutional Capacity Development: How to get the balance right for equitable water allocation in regions of water scarcity**

UNW-DPC is organizing, together with the Arab Water Council, Session 6.1.2 called “Institutional Capacity Development: How to get the balance right for equitable water allocation in regions of water scarcity”. The impetus for organizing this session comes from global changes such as climate change, population growth, the globalization of food and other markets, which suggest that demand for water in a variety of sectors is growing. If the MDG target related to water supply and sanitation is to be achieved, an equitable allocation of water between all these sectors will need to be maintained. A major aid to achieve this balance will be developing institutional capacity for water management stakeholders to plan, implement and enforce policy and legal reforms covering all necessary sectors (agriculture, industry, energy, environment, etc.). This session will allow stakeholders to work together to discuss what kind of institutional capacity development is required to achieve the appropriate policy and legal reforms needed to ensure the equitable allocation of water between sectors. Topic 6.1 coordinator is UNESCO-IHE.

Date: 20 March 2009

Time: 14:30–16:30

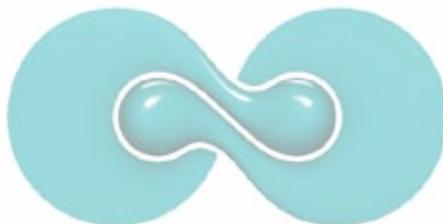
Venue: Room 6, Feshane Sadabad Hall

### **Session 6.1.5 Closing Session**

Date: 21 March 2009

Time: 11:00–13:00

Venue: Room 6, Feshane Sadabad Hall



# UNW-DPC's additional contributions

## 16 March 2009

### Side Publication on “Institutional Capacity Development in Transboundary Waters”

To provide detailed information to go alongside the Third World Water Development Report (WWDR3), a number of official WWDR3 Side Publications will be presented to the public by WWAP. One of those will be the UNW-DPC Side Publication, entitled “Institutional Capacity Development in Transboundary Waters”. This publication, inspired by the results of the UNW-DPC/UNESCO-IHP International Workshop on “Institutional Capacity Development in Transboundary Basins” identifies different, successful institutional mechanisms (related to cooperation, legal and policy frameworks and funding) that support joint decision making, monitoring and data sharing in transboundary waters around the world. It also discusses suggested capacity development activities that can potentially lead to the development and strengthening of these mechanisms in other basins.

**Panel** for the UNW-DPC Side Publication “Institutional Capacity Development in Transboundary Waters“

Date: 16 March 2009

Time & Venue: (tba)

### Contribution to the High Level Panel on Health Dignity and Economic Progress: Way forward for Gender Equity — Developing and monitoring Gender-sensitive Sustainable Sanitation Programmes and Indicators for MDG7

As a member of the UN-Water Task Force on Gender and Water, UNW-DPC is contributing to the Task Force in co-organizing this high-level panel.

The panel debate includes ministers and high-level staff of Governments, involved in water, sanitation, health and other sustainable development issues. The panellists will assess the outcomes and impacts of their national water and sanitation programmes aimed at social inclusion of particularly women. Such outcomes are often not reflected in regional and global assessments and raise the need to re-examine and to reformulate additional indicators which bring qualitative benefits for more accurate assessments.

Participating policy makers and experts will look at possibilities of developing national programmes which do measure these qualitative benefits, and piloting projects that would include new global sanitation indicators beyond 2015.

Date: 16 March 2009

Time: 14:30–19:00

Venue: Amphitheater 5, Sutluce

### Contribution to the Third World Water Development Report (WWDR3)

UNESCO-WWAP will be launching the WWDR3 at the Forum. UNW-DPC is a co-provider, along with UNESCO-IHE, of the section on Capacity Development in Chapter 14. Themes in the section include capacity assessment, change management, networking and the strengthening of institutional arrangements.

### Launch of the World Water Development Report (WWDR3)

Date: 16 March 2009

Time: 17:00–19:00

Venue: Amphitheater 2, Sutluce

For more information on UNW-DPC, please feel free to visit us at our stand, located in the UN-Water pavillion.

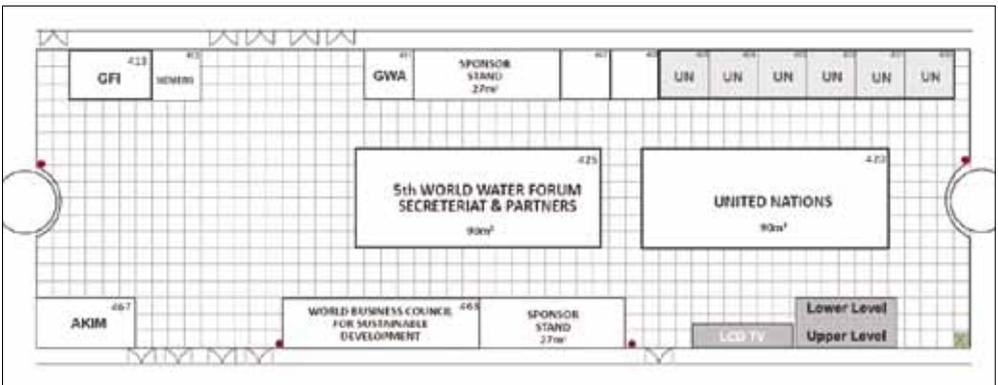
Venue of the UN-Water pavilion, including the UNW-DPC stand

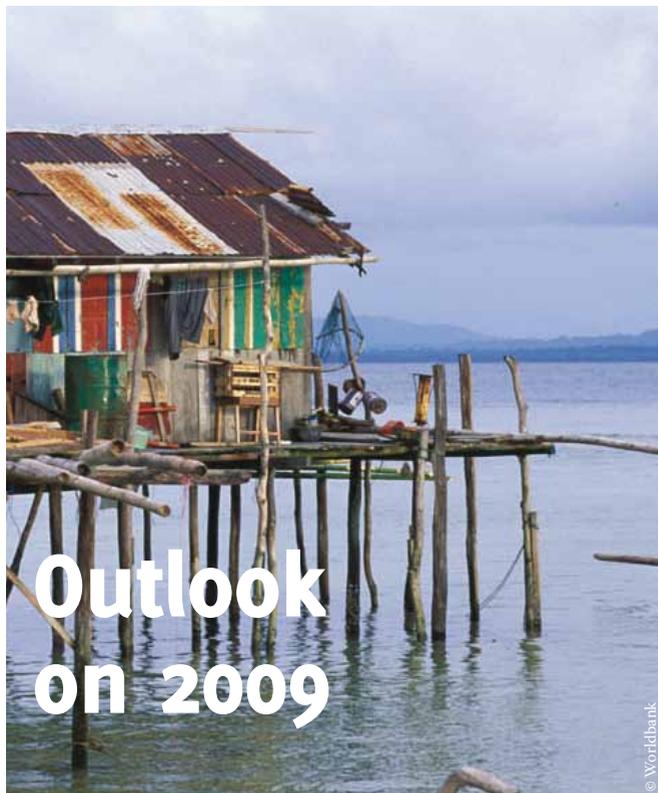


Golden Horn Congress & Exhibition Center  
16-22 March 2009



Location of the UN-Water stand in Foyer 4





UNW-DPC began planning early for 2009 and has already committed itself to many activities for the coming year.

A “Water & Land” Capacity Development Workshop for Water and Environmental Journalists in the Arab Countries will be organized by UNW-DPC, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Arab Water Council (AWC). It will take place in Cairo, Egypt in January 2009. Participants are water and environmental journalists and media professionals from Arab

countries representing different print and electronic media.

UNW-DPC also co-organizes a **Capacity Development Workshop on Improving Agricultural Productivity, Water Use Efficiency and Rural Livelihoods** on 28–30 January 2009 in Bangkok, Thailand. The workshop is organized jointly with



UN-DESA and UNESCAP. The overall objective of the workshop is to strengthen technical and institutional capacities of key government institutions and policy makers in developing and implementing sustainable agricultural, rural development and irrigation water management policies with specific thrust on rural poverty reduction.

UNW-DPC will launch the **Repository of Capacity Development Activities and Capacity Development Observatory** in the first quarter of 2009. The web-based repository is a one-stop point of access to information, knowledge and resources pertaining to capacity development activities and will offer a flexible search engine for access to information about capacity development activities carried out by UN-Water members and partners.

The 5th World Water Forum is the world’s largest water event. UNW-DPC is organizing sessions under the topic 1.2 “**Water-related Migration, Changing Land Use and human Settlements**” with the United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS) and the session 6.1.2 on „Institutional Capacity Development” together with UNESCO-IHE.

Furthermore UNW-DPC is co-organizing a High Level Panel on “Health, Dignity and Economic Progress—Way Forward for Gender Equity” within the framework of the UN-Water Task Force on Gender and Water.

UNW-DPC will also be attending the launch of the 3rd World Water Development Report (WWDR3), of which UNW-DPC is a co-provider with UNESCO-IHE, and the launch of the WWDR3 Side Publications, among which UNW-DPC's side publication on "Institutional Capacity Development in Transboundary Waters".

UNW-DPC and UNESCO-IHE will also present a joint publication on "Knowledge and Capacity Development for Improved Water Management". Please see page 8–11 for more details on the UNW-DPC activities during the 5<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum.

In an activity aimed at the training of trainers, UNW-DPC is cooperating with WMO in the organisation and implementation of a **Climate & Waters Affairs Training of Trainers Workshop for Eastern Europe** in Skopje, FYR Macedonia in April 2009. The focus of the workshop will be on supporting educators from post-conflict and developing countries in Eastern Europe.

A workshop on "**Education for Water Sustainability: Where Two International Decades Meet**" will be held during the International Conference



on Education for Sustainable Development, ESD 2009 in Bonn, Germany in April 2009. The workshop, which will be jointly organised by UNW-DPC, UNESCO Division of Water Sciences and the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU), will demonstrate and strengthen the links between the two international decades, the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and the International Decade for Action 'Water for Life'.

Scaling-up action on integrated flood management on flood-prone countries, cities, and communities is necessary to minimize loss of life from flooding and make efficient use of flood plain resources. UNW-DPC is thus cooperating with WMO, and the UNESCO Regional Centre on Urban Water Management (RCUWM-Tehran) in designing a **Training Course on Integrated Flood Management** planned for 'May 2009 in Tehran, Iran, which

will be aimed at training managers and policy makers across sectors on how to develop the critical and an integrated analytical approach to flood management.

UNW-DPC is cooperating with the United Nations University (UNU-EHS, UNU-INWEH) and UNESCO-IHP in a two year (2008–2009) interagency project on **Groundwater and Human Security (GWAHS) — Case studies**. The main goal of the project is to study the relationship between groundwater and human security, in particular the interactions between a biophysical system and a social system, but also including various economic sectors that depend on groundwater resources. Three case study areas have been identified in Egypt, Iran and Vietnam. The first workshop will take place in Shiraz, Iran in May 2009.

In cooperation with FAO, UNW-DPC will also organise five regional workshops on "**Capacity Development for Farm Management Strategies to Improve Crop-Water Productivity**" in China, Iran, Egypt, Burkina Faso and Zimbabwe in 2009. The workshops aim at training participants from various regions in the practical applications of AquaCrop, the FAO tool to estimate yield response to water, in order to improve their skills in strategic management aimed at increasing crop-water productivity in rainfed and irrigated production systems.





# Developing Institutional Capacity for Transboundary Water Cooperation

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One of the key limitations to harmonious development and management of water resources next to human capacity is the lack of institutional capacity at the organisational level and the level of the enabling environment, to assimilate advances in science and technology which are necessary to deal with the complex interactions in the water sector (Allaerts and Kaspersma, 2009).

Transboundary water resources, be they rivers, aquifers or lakes, play a significant role for socio-economic development and ecological sustainability worldwide and therefore will become

increasingly important in the future. Managing these waters in a sustainable way requires effective transboundary cooperation. Suitable institutional arrangements at the national and transboundary levels with strong enforcement capacity are a precondition for effective management of transboundary waters and cooperation among riparian countries.

A global legal framework for the cooperation on water exists, however, without binding force in many parts of the world. In addition to that, a variety of factors, ranging from hydrogeographical features of the basin to the

socio-political realities and donor commitment, determine the likelihood and shape of transboundary water cooperation. Cooperative institutional arrangements can be categorised according to their purpose (single – vs multi-purpose cooperations) and according to cooperation intensity including a greater or lesser transfer of authority to a joint body (Vollmer et al., 2009).

Despite growing attention and support for this topic, institutional capacities of transboundary cooperative mechanisms are often weak compared to the challenges they face. Some of the main institutional challenges are unclear shared responsibilities within national authorities, lack of coordination among them, and weak capacity of staff to cooperate and coordinate with riparian partners and to develop and implement existing policies and regulations.

Because of the importance of this topic, the UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development (UNW-DPC) and the UNESCO International Hydrological Programme (UNESCO-IHP), with kind support of UNECE, GEF and the German Federal Government, organised an International Workshop on “Institutional Capacity Development in Transboundary Basins - Lessons learned from practical experiences”, on 10-12 November 2008, held at BMZ, in Bonn, Germany.

Representatives from the following transboundary waters participated at the workshop and shared their experiences and lessons learned:

**Danube**, International Commission for the Protection of the

Danube River (ICPDR); **Guarani aquifer**, Guarani Aquifer Project, Organization of American States; **Great Lakes**, Canadian Section of the International Joint Commission (IJC); **Harirud**, Iranian Section of the Harirud Joint Commission; **Mekong**, Vietnam National Mekong Committee (VNMC); **Niger**, Autorité du Bassin du Niger / Niger Basin Authority (ABN); **Nile**, Nile Basin Initiative (NBI); **NWSAS**, L'Observatoire du Sahara et du Sahel (OSS); **Okavango**, Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM); **Rhine**, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU); and **Senegal**, Organisation de Mise en Valeur du Fleuve Sénégal (OMVS).



Close to 45 participants, including water managers, decision-makers and policy makers from various basins around the world and international organisations working in transboundary water cooperation and management, to share experiences and discuss necessary institutional arrangements for transboundary water cooperation, institutional capacity development issues and necessary specific capacity development activities.

The participants made several recommendations during the two and a half days to strengthen institutional capacities through

properly adapted capacity development activities.

Concerning the required institutional capacity for transboundary water cooperation and management, the participants mentioned several issues as essential. One of these issues concerned awareness at different levels, i.e. raising issues such as groundwater management, the effectiveness of certain mechanisms like the polluter-pays mechanism, political awareness and the enhancement of public-private partnerships. Also sustainable funding modalities, knowledge management approaches, shared visions and adaptable legal agreements for transboundary cooperation were mentioned. The participants raised the issue that a need exists to harmonise national policies, procedures and legislation on both water and land use, and to establish and strengthen links, among others to raise their awareness of transboundary water issues, e.g. with Regional Economic Commissions (RECs) and other regional commissions. Furthermore, a shift of the policy paradigm, e.g. supply vs demand management, the integration of national sectoral legislation, and the integration of groundwater issues in newly established agreements, policies and regulations, were recommended.

Recommendations for required capacity development activities included the following specific activities. One issue which was raised by most participants was support for direct basin exchanges. The participants, by experience, felt that the basin organizations would benefit greatly from frequent staff exchanges between basins around the world and of the

strengthening of existing twinning agreements between basins plus support for a “kick start” of new twinning agreements between basins. Training appeared another important tool for capacity development, including training for skill development at all levels, i.e. on adaptable agreement and legislation formulation, benefit-sharing negotiations, group moderation and the management of trust funds, and interdisciplinary training programmes for staff of ministries and secretariats. It was also mentioned that one should identify and collaborate with existing centres of excellence in the region to adapt their programmes towards transboundary water cooperation, such as curricula development and the development of cost-benefit sharing (economic) models. Career professionalisation should, however, not just include training, but also systems should be put in place to enable staff to operate effectively. Human capacity development hence plays an important role concerning the internalisation of the issues.

Another important issue raised was public (stakeholder) participation and the development of public participation capacities. To engage the public more in the topic of transboundary water cooperation and share lessons learned and experiences with other basins, it was discussed that successes and best practices should be made more visible, e.g. in the form of prizes, workshops and knowledge management. Also frequent dialogue forums, both horizontal and vertical (within and between states, ministries and cooperation partners), appeared to be useful approaches for getting all stakeholders on board. One specific

important point mentioned was coherence in capacity development; participants felt that a unified UN response to the needs of the different basins was needed to make support most effective and efficient.

These and more recommendations that were discussed during group discussions will be partly

included in the WWDR3 side publication on “Institutional Capacity Development in Transboundary Basins”, which will be circulated at the 5th World Water Forum in Istanbul, March 2009.

The final proceedings of the workshop, including the outcomes and recommendations of the workshop and full papers prepared by

the representatives of the basins will be published by UNW-DPC in March 2009 and will be made available on the website, [www.un-water.unu.edu](http://www.un-water.unu.edu) and is included on the UNW-DPC publications CD.

*Charlotte van der Schaaf,  
Programme Officer, UNW-DPC*

## András Szöllösi-Nagy on Transboundary Water Cooperation

**Dr Szöllösi-Nagy, water is a key to development of whole regions also in transboundary settings and still it is not always fairly shared between the riparians of a transboundary water basin. What do you consider are the major steps towards improved transboundary water cooperation that already have taken place over the last years and decades?**

Water is crucial for development in practically every aspect of life - health, environment, economy, welfare, politics and culture. It is also a fact that nearly half of the human population lives in transboundary water basins. Water has some times been indeed a cause of tensions or conflicts; it will continue to cause tensions as any other resource shared by humans. It

**András Szöllösi-Nagy**, has been Director of the Division of Water and Secretary of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) of UNESCO since 1989. Since 2000 he has also served as Deputy Assistant Director-General of the Natural Sciences Sector. Between 1999 and 2002 he was Coordinator of UNESCO's environmental programmes (MAB, IOC, IGCP and MOST). He also served as member of the Steering Committee of the Global Water Partnership and Chair of the World Water Council Publication Committee. He is a member of UN-Water, the Board of Governors of WWC and is co-Chair of the Political Processes Committee of the 5th World Water Forum.



may even cause conflicts because competition and conflicts are inherent to human nature. However, history shows that cooperation is much more common over this vital resource. One crucial step to improve cooperation over transboundary

water is to, change the mindset of some people, including first of all those of opinion makers, and remove from their minds the idea that water will inevitably be the cause of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century's wars. During the last decade important political figures,

journalists, experts, and various stakeholders as well as the general public became aware of the fact that water has been, is, and will be, a reason for cooperation. Water connects and does not divide. If this simple truth is recognized then I believe we can make significant progress in the management of transboundary cooperation and around the benefits that derive from it.

In 2000 UNESCO launched a programme entitled PCCP (from Potential Conflict to Cooperation Potential) the objective of which is to tip the balance away from potential conflicts towards cooperation. In 2006 PCCP was already showing in the United Nations' Department of Public Information list of "Ten stories the world should hear more about". Politicians changed their speeches, while they used to warn their audiences about the risks of water wars, they started to praise the opportunities that cooperation around water can offer. Courses and training for cooperation over water started being developed. There is a beginning of change. Today the peace-building potential of transboundary water resources is gradually recognized by the international community. This is already a great success. However, we still have a lot of efforts to make in order to ensure that the change of mindset translates into more actions on the ground.

**Based on the progress and successes made in the last years and decades, what do you consider as the major obstacles for fully integrated water resources management in transboundary basins?**

The major obstacles for fully integrated water resources management in transboundary basins is a combination of the lack of political will, financial and human resources, as well as the absence of resilient institutions that can cope with changes that occur in a transboundary basin. In order to expect a real change we indeed need the support of the political community that decides whether or not things will happen. We also need the financial resources that can make things happen and we need to build the capacity of the people who will make things happen. However, the increasing number of basin organisations created in the last decade shows that important steps have been taken for a successful management of transboundary water resources.

Last but not least I should perhaps mention a historical heritage that we seem to carry on in spite of all the changes that took place in the world over the past fifty years or so. That heritage is the application of the absolute sovereignty doctrine over natural resources in the territory of states. Some indeed, still have the perception that they can do whatever they want with the water resources running over their own territory, while ignoring the needs and interests of their neighbours whose lives depend on the same resources. In quite a few transboundary basins upstream – downstream relationships are sometimes totally paralyzed because of such positioning in the cooperation processes. I believe this perception of absolute sov-

ereignty is a historical relic of a pre-globalized world that constitutes a major obstacle in the development of transboundary water management. I must add though that the relevant UN conventions, such as the 1997 UN Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of Transboundary Watercourses, are definitely moving the regulation of these relations into the right direction so I would expect things to change although with a somewhat reduced speed.



**Which particular issues in transboundary water cooperation has the UNESCO International Hydrological Programme been focussing on?**

Through its PCCP programme, as defined by the governing bodies of the International Hydrological Programme, IHP supported extensive research activities on the assessment of transboundary surface water resources. This is performed and is continuously up-dated by a group led by Professor Aaron Wolf of the Department of Geosciences at the Oregon State University. These efforts did not only allow the definition of all the transboundary basins of the world but they also paved the way for an objective

identification of the major hot spots related to the management of transboundary waters. Based on this preliminary work, PCCP developed a whole lot of capacity enhancement tools including a long list of training materials focussing on the improvement of skills for successful management of shared water resources. These materials address a wide target audience, ranging from postgraduate students to high-level decision makers and are adaptable to the specificities of various regions in the world. Other tools were developed for the anticipation, prevention and resolution of water conflicts.

We also have a very extensive publication programme within PCCP. Very recently two major books have, for instance, been released on water conflict management. One is a dedicated to the situation in the Middle East. It is entitled *Water and Peace and the People*, by Professor Jon Martin Trondalen, a veteran of very concrete negotiations who presents a set of viable solutions to the attention of people, politicians included. The other book, written by Drs. Jerry Delli-Priscoli and Aaron Wolf explores the inexorable links between three facets of conflict management and transformation: Alternative Dispute Resolution, public participation, and institutional capacity.

Through its ISARM (Internationally Shared Aquifer Management) initiative IHP identified with a fairly high precision, for the first time indeed, the 270 known transboundary aquifers, as of today. This assessment of

groundwater resources is not limited to a simple listing; it presents a comprehensive data collection and analysis covering all the hydrological, institutional, environmental socio-economical and diplomatic aspects that need to be known about each and every single aquifer. ISARM also developed a number of training materials that aims at ensuring that potential conflicts over ground water resources do not turn into real ones. The work done within ISARM has provided the scientific backstopping for the preparation of a set of legal rules, which aim is to facilitate the joint management of transboundary aquifers by sovereign States.

I should also mention the educational efforts that IHP is jointly undertaking with the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education. Ms. Léna Salamé and Professor Pieter van der Zaag are developing a full-fledged MSc specialization on water conflict management. It is a truly interdisciplinary initiative to combine the various branches of knowledge, ranging from engineering all the way up to game theory, role playing, law and history to train experts in conflict avoidance and resolution.

**UNESCO and UNW-DPC have been working together on the International Workshop on Institutional Capacity development in Transboundary Basins. Talking about capacity development in the transboundary context: what do you consider are the most pressing capacity needs for better transboundary water cooperation?**

As mentioned earlier, there is a fundamental need to prepare humans and institutions to address properly the challenge of transboundary waters. Training at all levels to strengthen institutional and human skills is of utmost importance. The political will to engage in dialogue is another ingredient for progress in this field. The mixture of the two allows for a necessary harmonization of national policy instruments, legislations and rules of interaction. It is also a *sine qua non* for the collection and transparent exchange of data regarding the quantity and quality of shared water resources.

There is a tremendous need for capacity building to achieve these objectives. The establishment of proper institutions is key to effectively deal with transboundary water issues. I believe UNW-DPC could act efficiently in institutional capacity building while the training and formal education part could perhaps best be delivered by UNESCO-IHE and IHP.

Dr András Szöllösi-Nagy, thank you for your time.

*Capacity Pool held an extensive interview with András Szöllösi-Nagy which covered several aspects of transboundary water cooperation. In this issue we publish only parts of this interview due to limited space.*

## Imprint

The UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development (UNW-DPC) aims to support and strengthen the activities of the more than two dozen UN organizations and programmes within UN-Water and to support them in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) related to water and sanitation. The purpose of this quarterly newsletter is to inform about UNW-DPC and UN-Water capacity development activities, but also to act as a source of information on matters connected to capacity development in the water sector in general.

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## Coming Up

The next Capacity Pool will be looking at "Water and Land", mainly the causes and consequences of the continuing land degradation and desertification. Momentarily one third of the land's surface is threatened by desertification and over 250 million people are directly affected by desertification and nearly a billion are at risk. In the worst cases, they will be exposed to famine, mass migration and large economic losses.

UNW-DPC will also report on the Capacity Development Workshop for Environmental Journalists, jointly organised by UNW-DPC, UNCCD and the Arab Water Council, which was conducted on the topic of "Water and Land", specifically for journalists in the Arab countries and will show ways of developing capacity in specific regions and professions.

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