



## **The International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC)**

*A window for 2003 and beyond*

### **1. Introduction**

The Terms of Reference in 2000 as approved by the MoP in 2000, still are a solid basis for the IWAC work. Recent developments (as well in setting, organisation, and staffing) however, urge to reconsider the focus of IWAC. There for this document provides some background and describes a number of recent developments and activities in order to be able to reconsider and to discuss the (near) future of IWAC.

First the Terms of Reference of IWAC will be recapitulated. Then a brief of the IWAC activities in 2001-2002 will be described. Than the latest organisational developments will be presented.

As a start for a discussion of the work plan for the coming year, the major outcomes of the second IWAC Core Group Meeting (29 and 30 November 2001) and planned activities 2003 and beyond will be briefly described.

Finally proposed items for discussion are listed. Participants of the WGMA are invited to come up with additional proposals and suggestions.

### **2. The basic Terms of Reference of IWAC**

The following overall tasks in the Terms of Reference in 2000 as approved by the MoP in 2000, still form the basis for the IWAC work.

- a) To assist in the development and implementation of tailor-made monitoring and assessment systems in the UNECE region, and upon request in other regions following the offer of the Parties at their first meeting (ECE/MP.WAT/2, annex I, Helsinki Declaration) to share their experience with other regions in the World;
- b) To organize training courses and workshops, and/or render assistance to UNECE countries and joint bodies in conducting such events to improve monitoring and information systems for decision making;
- c) To act as a clearing-house on issues related to the sharing of data and information among UNECE countries that are gathered through monitoring systems according to the provisions of the Convention;
- d) To act as a coordinator, providing a network of scientists in Europe, promoting the exchange of concepts and findings of scientific research on monitoring strategies, and to establish a dialogue between scientists and policy makers, for the transformation of scientific results and technical know-how into policies, and to get the feedback from policy makers to scientists to seek answers for solving still existing problems and tackling those ahead;
- e) To assist joint bodies within the terms of article 9, paragraph 2, of the Convention in matters related to monitoring and assessment.

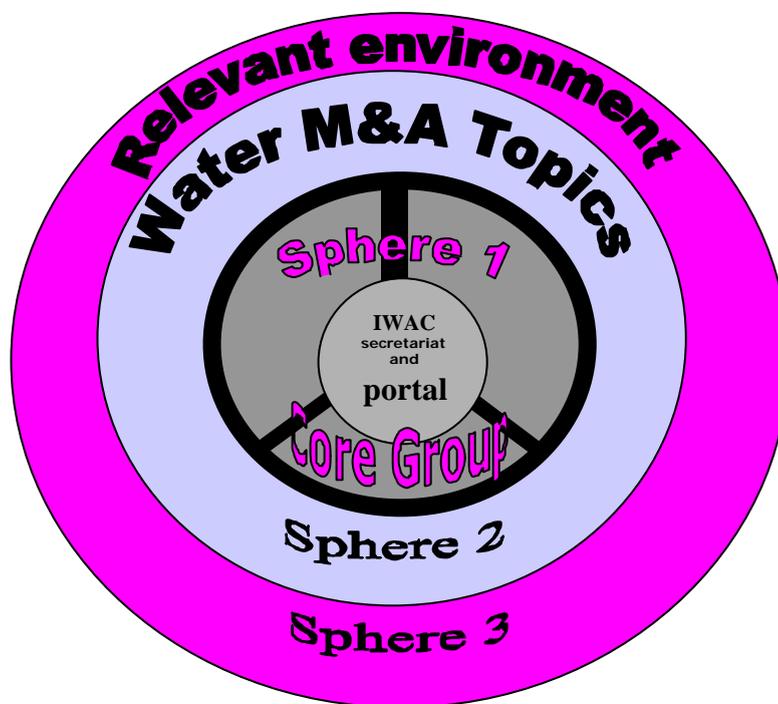
### 3. Brief of the main activities in 2001-2002:

Last year IWAC activities focussed on:

- a) Further development of the organisational set-up of IWAC:
  - Consolidation of the IWAC Core Group and organisation of its second Meeting
  - Exploration of possible financial resources: Dutch Partners for Water, EU R&D framework (5 and 6)
- b) Finalising the 10 rivers study:
  - Printing in Poland (March 2002)
  - Preparation of the www.web version ( February 2002)
  - Distribution of the report (July -August 2002)
- c) The Support to WGMA Pilot Program included
  - Logistic and didactic support to the Synthesis Workshop (Budapest, February 2002)
  - Logistic support to the Core Group on Groundwater (Budapest, 8-10 November 2001)
  - Arrangement of a new project leader for the River Pilots (June 2002)
  - Facilitating the printing of Russian translation of River Guidelines (April, 2002)
  - Logistic support to the Core Group on Groundwater (Helsinki, 2 October 2002)
  - Logistic and didactic support to the Pilot River Recommendations Workshop (Helsinki, 30 September-2 October 2002)
- d) Co-organisation with SHMU of a workshop on the WFD (Bratislava, June)
  - The Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute (SHMU) and IWAC cooperate in order to organise this significant international event. The international workshop brought about 50 participants to discuss the guiding documents for the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive.
  - Scientific and technical matters related to the WFD will be discussed in relation to capacity needs of those working in various UNECE regions to implement the WFD in real situations, particularly those requiring transboundary co-operation for success.
  - Three presentations and 6 discussion sessions (Analysis of pressures and impact , Heavily modified water bodies, Reference conditions inland surface waters, Intercalibration, Monitoring, and Tools on assessment, classification of groundwater)
- e) The World Water Assessment Programme and the WWDR report
  - IWAC received a request from UNESCO to provide an introduction to the indicator chapter of the World Water Development Report. IWAC hired and supported a Dutch expert (Carolin Lorenz) to prepare this chapter. It has been presented to UNESCO in July.
  - The Lake Peipsi Case has been accepted as a case for the WWDR. Both countries provided official confirmation from the Governments and have delivered their contribution. CTC (Peter Unt) was heavily involved.
- f) Further development of the IWAC Web Site included:
  - Finalisation of the technical set-up of the discussion platform
  - Upgrading of the content of the website
  - Experimenting with new software and advanced search engine (livelink)
- g) Representation of UNECE and IWAC at several international fora (Bonn, Groundwater meetings in Argentina and Libya, )
- h) Due to some personnel changes at the IWAC secretariat, we were urged to improvise. Some of the work was done by consultants. It is expected that 2 new experts will join IWAC in January 2003 on a full time basis.

#### 4. Development of organisation set-up of IWAC

- a) The following figure describes the organisation set-up and working mode of IWAC as developed over the last months:



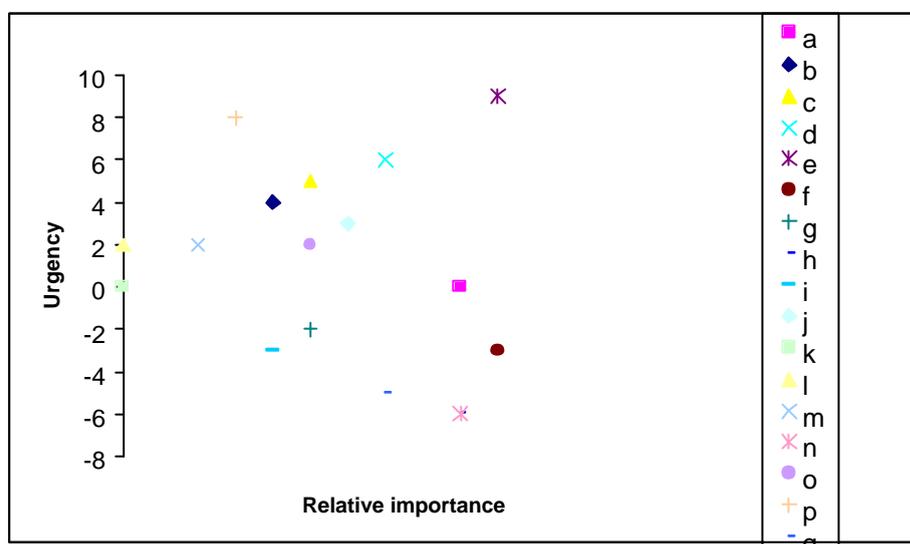
- b) The spheres can be described as follows:

- *In Sphere 1, the Core Group determines the strategies and programme. The secretariat provides all supporting and facilitating activities which have the Internet Portal and Discussion Fora as a Central Point*
- *In Sphere 2, specialist groups and members of the IWAC network (a.o the WGMA), supported by sphere 1, conduct the actual work*
- *With Sphere 3 the work should be exchanged: all stakeholders not directly involved in specific topics, but very much related to the outcome of the work; decision makers, research institutes, universities, NGO's, the public, and so on, are informed through the portal and have the opportunity to take part in discussions, obtain and/or provide information, participate in workshops or seminars etc.*

#### 5. The main results of the second Core Group Meeting: possible topics to explore

- a. During the latest IWAC Core Group meeting we had a brainstorm to determine relevant subjects for Sphere 2 (see figure under point 3). The following list includes all suggestions:
- Relationship between pressures and quality standards, (this has to do with cause-effect, indicators, cost benefit analyses, etc.) (a)
  - Defining reference conditions and ecological status (b)
  - Groundwater Quality Standards (c)
  - Dissemination of developments in the working groups of WFD to UNECE countries: lessons learned and ideas on transboundary waters (d)
  - Exchange of ideas and experiences on implementation of WFD with accessing and other UNECE countries (e)
  - Practical implications of the Water Frame Directive on monitoring (f)
  - Priority substances (g)

- Public participation in water management and implications of the Aarhus convention on public access to information (h)
  - Surface-groundwater interaction (i)
  - The WWF3 issues (Climate Variability and Water Management (j), Water, Food and Environment, Financing Water Utilities, Good Governance (k))
  - Water Sharing in Transboundary Basins (exchange of Information and Learning from each other experiences) (l)
  - Stepwise Approaches of Development of a Monitoring System (m)
  - Utilisation of Voluntary Monitoring (n)
  - Groundwater Protection (o)
  - World Water Assessment Programme (p)
  - Relations between different Conventions and Directives (q)
- b. The IWAC Core Group realised that it is impossible to start everything at once with equal effort. Therefore the so-called urgent-important quadrant has been worked out; to be able to compare the importance and urgency of the different subjects in a very subjective way:



- c. The Core Group decided to focus on a cluster of very urgent and important issues and on two long-term very important items. This does not mean that IWAC will not pay attention to the other issues. To be able to determine our focus, the Core Group decided to go over each issue in order to link the issue to a mode, an activity and a project leader.

- The IWAC Core Group decided to organise the Bratislava Workshop (Peter Roncak, David Nieuwenhuis)
- The "Relationship between pressures and quality standards, (this has to do with cause-effect, indicators, cost benefit analyses, etc.) (a)" will be taken up in 2003.
- Our Core Business: "Practical Implications of the Water Frame Directive on Monitoring (f)". This will start as a series of website discussions and depending on outcomes end up in small specialist workshops. The exchange of staff is a possible action.
- CTC will take up "Public Participation in water management and implications of the Aarhus Convention on public access to information (h) " The range of activities will depend on the availability of funds but already 3 related activities have been identified and presented during the meeting:
- Mr. Geo Arnold will act as driving force for "Groundwater Quality Standards (c), Surface-Groundwater Interaction (i) and Groundwater Protection (o)
- From "The WWF3 Issues", only Climate Variability and Water Management (j), seems important. Core Group members will be informed on the progress in this field.

- “Stepwise Approaches of Development of a Monitoring System (m)” has been taken up by the WGMA. Mr. Martin Adriaanse (p.m)
- The important item “Water Sharing in Transboundary Basins (exchange of information and learning from each others experiences) (l)” will be a discussion forum, a link to databases will be provided and IWAC will keep it on the agenda of the Bureau of the Convention.
- Risk Assessment will be taken up by SHMU (Roncak)

## 6. Planned activities 2003 and beyond

In general the IWAC secretariat is running in a low gear due to some staffing problems and also the financial future is still not very clear. The actual staff is trying to keep things running as much as possible. This situation makes the development of plans not easy, but in general terms IWAC tends to shift more into assessment in stead of monitoring. Another development might be to support the development of transboundary commissions and off course the WFD will influence and will have a focus of IWAC activities. With activities we should keep the organisational set-up in mind so everybody can start organising activities in sphere 2. So far planned activities include:

### **IWAC Workshops**

After Bratislava we would like to continue to organise one or two IWAC Workshops related to Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Waters. Coming year RIZA and hopefully IWAC as a whole will take the lead in organising MTM-IV.

### **Follow-up of contribution to the World Water Development Report**

IWAC will be involved in the development of the second World Water Development Report (2006). Probably this report will have a focus on NIS countries. This will create opportunities in relation to the following item.

### **Building blocks of the EU water initiative for NIS countries**

IWAC will probably play a role in this initiative. This includes a number of brainstorming sessions, the use of special internet forums established under the IWAC’s web site, and in-depth discussions at the forthcoming working group meetings. This process also gives us ample opportunities to carry out work on the respective parts of the EU Water Initiative’s NIS package related to IWRM.

### **Building strategic alliances**

To be able to fulfil the high expectations of IWAC future activities it is a necessity to build alliances with other Topic and training centres in the water world.

### **IWAC Website**

So far the IWAC website provides some basic information and is a place to download documents. We would like to start using the discussion fora as a domain to exchange information on selected issues. Therefore we need moderators for the different relevant subjects.

## 7. Items for discussion

The following items are suggested for discussion:

- What do you think of the selected subjects, do we still miss some? Who volunteers for project leadership?
- Are there any additional proposals for activities of IWAC for the period 2003 or beyond?
- Do you have suggestions for IWAC workshops, can we contribute?
- Do you have suggestions for subjects for the web side based discussion fora?
- You are all invited to volunteer as fora moderators!