



COMMISSION D'HYDROLOGIE

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COMMISSION FOR HYDROLOGY

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GENEVA, 26 April 2006

Dear Sir/Madam,

It is now some 18 months since the twelfth session of the Commission for Hydrology (CHy-XII) and almost a year since I informed you of progress that has been achieved against the CHy programme of work. I am pleased to advise you that the Advisory Working Group met in March 2006 and most members reported that considerable advances had been made under their areas of activity. I want to place on record my deep appreciation to all of you who have contributed to the work of the Commission over this period and also to those of you who have agreed to contribute in the future. I would encourage you to regularly visit the CHy Web site (<http://www.wmo.int/web/homs/chy/chyp1.html>).

Briefly, I bring to your notice the following progress that has been achieved in each area of work of the Commission.

Basic Systems (Paul Pilon)

Volume I of the Manual on Stream Gauging has been redrafted by an Expert from the US Geological Survey and is ready for peer review and a draft of Volume II will be ready for review by July 2006. Reviewers of these drafts will be appointed by the president of CHy in consultation with the WMO Secretariat.

A project to undertake a survey-based inter-comparison of Hydrological Information Systems (HIS) has commenced and the results of an interim study to define the aspects of HIS's that will be used in the inter-comparison was presented to the WHYCOS International Advisory Group in early February 2006. A draft report will be available by June 2006. *I would urge any members of CHy who would like to contribute to this activity to contact me or the WMO Secretariat.*

With respect to the project on the Assessment of Performance of Flow Measurements and Techniques, NHSs from Australia, Canada, Russian Federation and the USA are currently involved in the preparation of the proposal and the WMO Secretariat has confirmed the interest of the Association of Hydro-Meteorological Equipment Industry (HMEI) in participating in the project. A team leader for the activity is yet to be appointed. *I would urge any members of CHy or the Basic Systems OPACHE who may be interested in leading or contributing to this activity to contact either Mr Paul Pilon or myself.* The possible involvement of ISO in this activity will also be explored.

To: Members of the Commission for Hydrology (CHy-185)
Members of the Open Panels of CHy Experts (OPACHes)

The AWG noted that in recent years there has been little advancement in respect to hydrometric activities within WMO and therefore has suggested that there is a need for reviving interest in this field. As such, it is recommended that we explore the possibility of organizing an International Conference on Hydrometry towards the end of 2007. The International Association of Hydrological Sciences expressed its willingness to jointly organize such a conference. A draft proposal addressing need, scope and resource mobilization is being developed. *I would urge any members of CHy or the Basic Systems OPACHE who would like to contribute to this activity to contact the WMO Secretariat or me.*

The AWG also agreed that a draft document on the Quality Management Framework for Hydrological Observations should be prepared for consideration by the CHy-XIII.

Water Resources Assessment and Water Use (Ann Calver)

Following a meeting of experts and representatives from the Water Resources Assessment and Water Use OPACHE in Geneva in late 2005, a table of contents has been prepared for the Guidelines for Water Resources Assessment and the majority of contributors have been identified. It is expected that the draft guidance will be available by the end of 2006.

The AWG member responsible for Water Resources Assessment and Water Use (Ms A. Calver (UK)) has indicated that there has been a lack of response from the members of the Water Resources Assessment and Water Use OPACHE and some difficulty in identifying team leaders for the other activities under her terms of reference. The specific areas include:

- To investigate the use of modern modelling technologies to increase network effectiveness and assist in the rationalization of hydrological networks;
- To identify and document methods of assessing the water losses from reservoirs and large lakes.

I would urge any members of CHy or the Water Resources Assessment and Water Use OPACHE who may be interested in leading or contributing to these activities to contact either Ann Calver or myself.

Hydrological Forecasting and Prediction (Jian Zhang)

A meeting of representatives from Hydrological Forecasting and Prediction OPACHE on the preparation on the Manual on Flood Forecasting held in Beijing in November 2005 established an agreed table of contents and identified authors who had accepted to contribute to various chapters.

Disaster Mitigation – Floods and Droughts (Siegfried Demuth)

Manuals on Design Flood Estimation and Low Flow Estimation and Forecasting are well advanced in their preparation. In particular, members of the Disaster Mitigation OPACHE have shown considerable interest and willingness to contribute to the Manual on Low Flow Estimation and Forecasting. The work on the preparation of the manuals will be consistent with the content of the Guide to Hydrological Practices.

Analysis of Hydro-climatological data for Variability and Trends (Harry Lins)

A process to identify the pristine basins in association with NMHSs has been developed along with revised criteria for the identification of climate sensitive stream gauging sites. A template for an online form for the NMHSs to use in responding to the request has been developed. Coordination of the Commission for Hydrology activities with the GTN-H is being addressed.

International data access and exchange and WHYCOS (Marcos Frietas)

The "Technical Conference and Seventh WHYCOS International Advisory Group" (WIAG) were held in Geneva in January/February 2006 and a meeting of the Global Terrestrial Network – Hydrology (GTN-H) was held in July 2005. The WIAG session was held in two parts – a technical conference followed by the administrative meeting of WIAG. The overall view was that the WHYCOS programme was developing in a satisfactory manner. The WHYCOS Guidelines have now been published and the WHYCOS Website has been launched. Additional information can be found in the new Website www.WHYCOS.org.

Capacity Building and Technology Transfer (Enefiok Udoeka)

In accordance with the WMO Strategy on Education and Training in Hydrology and Water Resources approved by EC-LVII in 2005, surveys on training needs in different Regions have been carried out (e.g. in Regions III, V and VI where the WGSH had organized their sessions).

Areas of coordination with and activities of Regional Working Groups in Hydrology (Julius Wellens-Mensah)

The recommendation of CHy on widening the scope of the WMO Regional Meteorological Training Centres was referred by EC-LVII to the EC Panel on Education and Training. The EC Panel, which met in Geneva, recommended that the RMTCs should be renamed as WMO Regional Training Centres in order to be able to cover the water and climate issues in addition to weather (meteorological) issues. The criteria to be applied for selecting any training centre as a WMO Regional Training Centre (particular in respect of those covering hydrological activities) will need to be established.

The AWG discussed ways of providing opportunities for the Regional Working Groups for Hydrology to have a larger say in deciding and participating in the activities of CHy. Various alternatives were discussed. The AWG proposed that the chairpersons of Working Groups on Hydrology from all the Regions be invited to the AWG meeting, just before the CHy session. It was hoped that this would be helpful in establishing the ownership of the CHy programme of activities with the Members and at the same time enthruse greater participation of the experts in OPACHE activities. *The thoughts of members of the Commission and the OPACHES on this issue would be appreciated. It has been suggested by a number of RA WGSH that members of the Working Groups should also be members of the relevant OPACHES to further encourage collaboration.*

INFOHYDRO

A simplified new version of the INFOHYDRO questionnaire has been sent to 66 Members of WMO using English as the official language and who had nominated a Hydrological Adviser, in order to extend the trial sample to test the new version. The deadline for submission of information has been extended to the 28 April 2006. *I urge all members of CHy who have been asked to contribute to this activity to complete the INFOHYDRO forms and provide feedback to the WMO Secretariat.*

Guide to Hydrological Practices (including its electronic version)

Under the leadership of Mr Karl Hofius, chairman of the 6th Edition of the Guide Review Committee, the preparation of the 6th Edition of the Guide is well advanced. It is expected that the Guide will be published before the next session of the Commission for Hydrology (CHy-XIII, 2008). The selection of editorial reviewers of the Guide is the next step and the WMO Secretariat in association with Mr Hofius will undertake this.

PMP Manual

The linguistic editing of the draft PMP manual submitted by Prof Wang (China) has been completed and the edited version has been given to the president of CHy, Mr P. Pilon (Canada) and all of the experts who participated in the meeting of reviewers in November 2004. The next step is the technical review of this linguistically edited text. The layout and the final edition would be prepared as the last step.

Project on Global/Regional Short-term Flood Forecasting

A meeting with the core experts involved in this project took place in Costa Rica in March 2006 during the International Conference on Flash Floods organized by WMO and the National Weather Service of the United States of America. A revised set of actions was identified and will be implemented over the next three years.

HOMS

The AWG, in its capacity as the Steering Committee for HOMS, reviewed the status of HOMS at its March 2006 meeting. Efforts have been made to update the online version of the HOMS Reference Manual (HRM), in particular by upgrading the French, Spanish and Russian versions. A system to monitor the utilization of the on-line version of HRM was installed in October 2005 to provide detailed information on the type of visitors, etc. A review of HOMS will be undertaken in October 2006, once results of detailed monitoring and the impact of refurbishing the HRM are available.

It is planned that WHYCOS products development methodologies, the manuals and products under APFM will be established as HRM components.

Inter-commission Task Team on the Future WMO Information System - FWIS (now WIS - WMO Information System) (EC-LVI Res. 2)

It should be noted that hydrological information in a number of countries forms a subset of the larger Water Information Systems and that the information across geographical and continental boundaries was of limited use, except in transboundary river basins, where mechanisms for sharing the relevant information would reflect the needs of the countries making up the basin. It is proposed that CHy maintain a watching brief on the developments taking place in WIS periodically and explore the possibility of connecting the HISs developed under WHYCOS with the WIS, through ensuring adequate inter-operability.

Inter-commission Task Team on International Polar Year (EC-LVI Res. 11 and 12)

CHy is represented on the Inter-Commission Task Team on IPY by Mr Arni Snorrason who attended its last meeting in February 2006 in Boulder, USA. The Arctic-HYCOS forms an important component of the Arctic HYDRA, a suite of hydrological projects approved by the Joint Committee of IPY, which is recommended to be taken up during the IPY.

Inter-commission Task Team on Quality Management Framework (EC-LVI Res. 8)

The AWG at its March 2006 meeting discussed the drivers of QMF for the Meteorological Services vis-à-vis the needs for such a framework for Hydrological Services. A draft paper on QMF in Hydrology will be prepared and presented for discussion at the CHy at its next session.

Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Programme

Mr Siegfried Demuth will represent the Commission on the WMO Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Programme (DPM) Task Team.

Commission for Instruments and Methods of Observation (CIMO)

Mr Z. Kopaliani (Russia) represented CHy in the meeting of CIMO. CIMO expressed the desire to collaborate with CHy on hydrological instruments. Noting that CHy has not been very active in this field of technology for quite sometime and that a number of new technologies are emerging and are in use, it is important that CHy undertakes some activity in this field. Following discussion with Mr Ray Canterford (acting president of CIMO), the CIMO Guide for Inter-comparison of Instruments (sixth Edition) will be applied in taking up activities envisaged by CHy. In view of the activities proposed to be undertaken by CHy in connection with "Assessment of the Performance of Flow Measurement Instruments", it was decided that efforts should be made to make use of the expertise of CIMO by associating one of its experts with CHy activities in this subject.

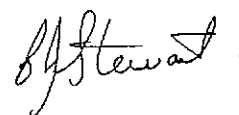
Programme Structure

At the UN level, the next decade (2006-2015), and particularly the period covered by the 7th Long-term Plan envisages a focus on "Water for Life" through poverty alleviation, sustainable development and disaster preparedness and mitigation. It was therefore felt that WMO should ensure that its position in the areas of water resources assessment and flood management remains its primary focus. At the March 2006 meeting of the AWG the 7th Long-term Plan proposal submitted by the Secretariat was discussed at length and proposed a re-structure for the programme. The discussions and suggestions made by the members during CHy-XII session formed the overall guiding principles for this review. The needs expressed by the Regional Associations through the Working Groups on Hydrology also provided important inputs. *The thoughts of members of the Commission on this issue would be appreciated.*

4th World Water Forum

WMO had a very successful involvement in the 4th World Water Forum held in Mexico in March 2006. The WMO stand was very popular and the vast range of participants quickly picked up all of the pamphlets and documents. WMO also arranged a number of sessions covering the importance of information to IWRM, flash floods, the Associated Programme on Flood Management and drought management and participated on a number of expert panels. WMO Secretariat staff and the president of CHy participated in a number of press conferences and interviews. Further details, including copies of presentations, can be found at: <http://www.wmo.int/web/homs/WWF4/WWF4-02.htm>

Yours faithfully,



(Bruce Stewart)
President of CHy