

International Flood Initiative (IFI)
Forth Meeting of the Advisory Committee (e-conference)
26th January 2010, from 9:30 to 11:45 UTC/GMT

1. Welcome, Self Introduction and Adapting the Agenda

1.1 The forth meeting of the Advisory Committee (IFI-AC) of the International Flood Initiative (IFI) was held in the form of a net-meeting (e-conference) with nine representatives from UNESCO (IHP and IHE), WMO, UNU (ISP and EHS) and ICHARM on Tuesday, the 26th January 2010. This e-conference was held in conjunction with an ongoing IFI e-WS which ran from January 4th to February 5th, 2010. The meeting's moderator, Mr. Stewart, welcomed the participants to the meeting and asked them to provide a quick self introduction.

1.2 The list of the participants is provided at Annex I.

1.3 The moderator introduced a draft agenda which was adopted by the participants as given in Annex II.

2. Recap on IFI e-WS Discussions

2.1 A brief background of the IFI e-WS was presented by Mr. Stewart. All submitted documents and a registry of email traffic is available at: <http://www.ifi-home.info/IFI-e-WS.html>

2.2 The IFI e-WS has had some positive and negative aspects. In general, it was good to receive input from the various IFI partners. However input came at different times and in differing formats. We will have to improve reporting system. A table of the IFI related activities was made as an outcome of this IFI e-WS based on the reports submitted by the IFI partners. This table is also available in the above URL.

3. Reports on IFI Commitments

UNU (Web-Tutorials)

3.1 The report on IFI commitments was started by UNU. Mr. Herath reported on UNU-ISP activities to develop six web-tutorials. They are all interactive tutorials and can be completed by participants. UNU-ISP is very keen to receive any comments and suggestions from IFI partners on how they can be improved. More detail can be found at: http://www.ifi-home.info/e_WS_UNU_Herath.pdf

3.2 UNU-ISP will collaborate on the web-tutorial development with the new representative of UNESCO-IHE (Mr. Uhlenboork). Mr. Renaud from UNU-EHS also will support this activity by providing training material on flood risk assessment.

3.3 There is also an opportunity to link the web-tutorials with similar education materials associated with the WMO (APFM) and ICHARM. Mr. Demuth suggested that the working group on the web-tutorials set up a mechanism to circulate information among IFI members and then IFI members could become involved when it is necessary.

3.4 It has been decided that UNU, IHE and ICHARM will work together to develop a web-link to publicly available web-tutorials on the IFI website. They will inform the result to the IFI members in future.

UNESCO

3.5 Mr. Demuth reported on various IFI related activities in UNESCO. UNESCO and ICHARM are working on the assessment of a flood forecasting and warning system for Humid Tropics Region with support of UNESCO-Jakarta office. The aim is to establish a forecasting system that can be used in Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

3.6 UNESCO is also working with ICHARM on a flood management project proposed from UNESCO-Accra office with the aim of looking at flood disaster preparedness in six West African countries. It is mainly to provide them with the necessary tools/training and develop a flood forecasting system. There is a meeting in Benin in a few weeks to discuss the project in detail. WMO would like to support this project by involving the national meteorological services in target countries.

3.7 UNESCO is also involved in a project financed by European Commission in collaboration with center of eco-hydrology and hydrology in Wallingford to study Flood Frequency Analysis in Europe taking into account the impact of future climate change. It was mentioned that there are some similar activities underway in the US and Australia. Mr. Tyagi proposed that these different groups should get together and look into providing guidance material for countries that have a lack of data. This was agreed by UNESCO. UNESCO will share information on this with IFI members. Mr. Stewart and Mr. Takeuchi will provide some contact information on Australia and US as well. This could be one of the focus area within the new IFI activities.

3.8 UNESCO have recently finished a comprehensive study on flood activities in various international organization that it will circulate to IFI members to have look at it and identify research gaps.

WMO

3.9 Mr. Tyagi reported on the WMO and Associated Program on Flood Management (APFM). The WMO and some 20 multidisciplinary partner institutions launched the HelpDesk for Integrated Flood Management (IFM HelpDesk) in June 2009 during the Second Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. The HelpDesk will provide demand-driven guidance to all countries working on integrated flood management policy, strategy and development.

3.10 WMO is also collaborating with USAID/ OFDA on the development of a Strategy for Flood Forecasting and Early Warning in the Zambezi basin. The proposed project is intended to assess the capacity for flood forecasting and early warning in riparian countries and particularly in the Zambezi River basin and formulate a consensus strategy. The Strategy will include actions to strengthen regional cooperation and promote data and information exchange by setting up appropriate institutional mechanisms.

3.11 WMO have also conducted education courses and training activities such as one in collaboration with UNU-DPC in RCUWM-Tehran (UNESCO Category II Center) and the training of trainers in Latin America. WMO also is developing a flood hazard mapping manual with ISDR, UNU and ICHARM. Mr Tyagi stressed the need to pay attention to the development of agreed terminology.

3.12 Mr. Tyagi proposed that IFM HelpDesk be considered as new activity of IFI. This was accepted by all IFI members. WMO (APFM) will circulate a brief formal proposal on IFM HelpDesk and they will use the IFI brand on their web site and services.

3.13 Mr. Stewart added to WMO IFI related activities, the development of manual on flood forecasting. He suggested that this manual be reviewed by IFI members and then it can be published under banner of IFI. The proposal was accepted by IFI members.

ISDR (sent by e-mail)

3.14 As ISDR couldn't participate online their activities were reported by Mr. Basher after the meeting. ISDR is contributing to a World Water Development Report (WWDR) uncertainty and risk theme. This includes work on an interim terminology for water-related risk. ISDR is also continuing to advocate and support awareness and activity within UN Water. ISDR is trying to promote high-level political engagement and action on water and disaster in UNSGAB/HELP.

3.15 ISDR has observed that Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is now quite well placed in the UNFCCC agreements but water remains largely invisible. Moreover most current DRR-related adaptation is actually being undertaken in the water sector. ISDR is working to start better connections between CC, DRR and water risks. The objective is stronger integrated engagement of water expertise and organizations in adaptation arena.

ICHARM

3.16 Mr. Takeuchi reported on ICHARM's interest on development of the early flood warning systems in collaboration with IF-Net. A system so called Integrated Flood Analysis System (IFAS) has been developed by ICHARM for rainfall-runoff generation regardless of basin size and geographic locations. The system can be used not only for flood analysis but also for drought monitoring. Joint training courses on IFAS have been conducted in collaboration with WMO.

3.17 ICHARM is also working on a large-scale flood report or flood year book. Several reports have been collected from IFI and non-IFI partners and it is under final review (to be published in 2010). This report can be considered as an ICHARM contribution to the IFI reference series after peer-review by IFI members.

3.18 ICHARM is also taking part in a few activities with UNESCO as mentioned by Mr. Demuth in the Humid Tropical region and in the West Africa flood management.

3.19 A web-tutorial on flood hazard mapping is also under development with UNESCO-IHE and ICHARM will share information on this with Mr. Herath at UNU.

4. New Commitments and Activities

4.1 Mr. Stewart summarized the e-conference discussion under agenda item 3(a) and 3(b) focusing on areas where IFI can add to the current activities under the IFI banner, e.g.:

- Additional expertise required
- Additional geographical inputs/opportunities/synergies
- Additional involvement through participation

4.2 Mr. Stewart invited IFI members to identify and discuss possible new commitments and activities such as new IFI commitments under the UNSGAB/HLEP.

4.3 A few new commitments already discussed included:

- Flood Frequency Analysis (UNESCO, WMO and ICHARM)
- West Africa Flood Management (UNESCO, WMO and ICHARM)
- IFM HelpDesk (WMO lead with participation of all IFI members)
- Peer-review of the Flood Forecasting Manual (WMO) and Large-scale Flood Report (ICHARM).

UNSGAB/HELP Commitments:

4.4 Mr. Takeuchi and Mr. Stewart emphasized on two new commitments of IFI in UNSGAB/HELP “Water and Disaster” Report. The one is on development of the flood forecasting and early warning system (item 2) and the other one is flood preparedness indices and check list (item 30): http://www.ifi-home.info/e_WS_UNSGAB_HLEP_IFI.pdf

4.5 Regarding item 2 of the above action plan (flood forecasting and early warning system) there is a few ongoing activities among IFI members such as flood forecasting manual of WMO, flood forecasting projects of UNESCO in Humid Tropical region as well as West Africa and IFAS development at ICHARM. They can also be supported by web-tutorial and educational activities at UNU and IHE.

4.6 ICHARM has started to work on item 30 (flood preparedness indices and risk indicators). There is a WMO-UNESCO document on assessing capabilities for water resources management that can be used as an example for flood preparedness check list. Mr. Stewart will share this document with IFI members. Mr. Demuth also informed the group about the UN task force on water-related risk indicators lead by Ulcay Unver. He will provide contact information to ICHARM. ICHARM will collect all information in order to draft an outline to share with IFI member for future actions.

New Activity Proposed by UNESCO

4.7 Mr. Demuth informed the meeting of two new activities at UNESCO concerning how we can manage water-related disaster in a Changing Climate. One of them will deal with extreme precipitation and climate change impact on extreme precipitation, with the aim of developing guidelines for risk-based decision making in the current situation and under the impact of climate change. Another new activity is hydrological modeling of flood and drought. It would again to look at two extremes (flood and drought) to develop technical tools for hydrological modeling in a changing environment. This will include GIS and RS to study impact of land use change on water related disasters.

4.8 These two activities are at early stage in UNESCO and they are planned for the next two years. IFI members expressed their interest to know more detail on these two projects in order to offer possible contribution. Mr. Herath informed on a few ongoing studies at UNU on extreme precipitation and inundation modeling. Mr. Takeuchi mentioned on importance of extreme precipitation in the East and South-East Asia. ICHARM is also interested in hydrological Modeling tools. Mr. Demuth will share information on next steps with IFI members for their possible collaboration.

5. Promotion of IFI

5.1 One way of IFI promotion is using IFI brand for the IFI individual products. In order to do this, Mr. Stewart suggested drafting and circulation of a simple form (approximately two pages) that describe the project and involvement of IFI partners and quality control process, etc. This can be done electronically and after IFI approval and considering their comments, such a product can use IFI brand. Mr. Stewart will draft an outline as the first step for IFM Help Desk as an example. The idea was accepted by all IFI members. IFI working group products and result of discussed commitments such as web-tutorial and reference series will use IFI brand automatically.

5.2 Mr. Takeuchi highlighted the importance of IFI exposure in some international conferences and Forums. WWF, Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and the 5th International Conference on Flood Management in 2011 is a number of occasions that IFI

should take part. This was agreed by the members. Mr. Demuth also suggested that IFI should make a presentation at the IHP Intergovernmental Council to report on its achievements so far and demonstrate for UNESCO Executive Board how UN organizations are working together efficiently on flood management. This was also accepted by IFI members. IFI Secretariat will take care of the proposed IFI exposure.

6. Conclusion and Wrap-up

6.1 It is decided that the IFI Secretariat would draft the report of the meeting with assistance from the moderator. The table of IFI commitments would also be updated.

6.2 Mr. Stewart suggested developing a consistent and simple reporting mechanism and evaluation system for the future. He will discuss this issue with IFI members through the rest of the IFI e-WS until February 5th.

6.3 It is decided to organize such an e-conference on a regular basis (say every six months). However it was agreed that the working group can have their own discussion meeting whenever it is necessary.

6.4 The Chair thanked all the participants for their constructive contribution to the discussions. The participants thanked the Chair. The meeting was closed at 11:45 (UTC/GMT).

LIST of the On-line PARTICIPANTS

Moderator and IFI Chair

Mr. Bruce Stewart

UNESCO

Mr. Siegfried Demuth (IHP)
Mr. Stefan Uhlenbrook (IHE)

WMO

Mr. Avinash Tyagi

UNU

Mr. Srikantha Herath (UNU-ISP)
Mr. Fabrice Renaud (UNU-EHS)

ICHARM

Mr. Kuniyoshi Takeuchi
Mr. A. Jayawardena
Mr. Yoshiyuki Imamura
Mr. Ali Chavoshian

*UN/ISDR sent an E-mail following the e-conference.

Agenda

Date: 26th January 2010

Net-meeting: The starting time is 9:30 am (UTC/GMT) using SKYPE

Supporting Documents: <http://www.ifi-home.info/IFI-e-WS.html>

1. Welcome, self introduction and adapting the Agenda

2. Recap on discussions to date - Moderator

3. Discussion on reports of commitments.

We will work through the tabular report on Commitments and progress made focusing on:

- (a) Areas where we can add to the current activities under the IFI banner, e.g.
 - Additional expertise required
 - Additional geographical inputs/opportunities/synergies
 - Additional involvement through participation
- (b) Any other IFI commitments according to the IFI brochure
- (c) New commitments from "Water and Disaster" UNSGAB/HELP or similar
- (d) Identification of and discussion on possible new commitments.

4. Promotion of IFI

5. Conclusion and wrap-up