

Groundwater Resources Governance in Transboundary Aquifers (GGRETA) Project

FIRST PHASE FINAL PROJECT MEETING

15-16 December 2015

Rooms XIII, XIV and XV (Miollis Building)

UNESCO HQ, Paris, France

BACKGROUND

This project is executed within the framework of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) “Global Programme Water Initiatives (GPWI) – Water Diplomacy” activities, UNESCO International Hydrological Programme (IHP) has been entrusted to undertake a project entitled “**Groundwater Resources Governance in Transboundary Aquifers (GGRETA)**”. The GGRETA project Phase 1 (2013-2015) aimed at conducting a detailed multi-disciplinary study of transboundary aquifers in three selected case studies. The three transboundary aquifers selected are:

- the Pretashkent Aquifer (Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan),
- the Stampriet Transboundary Aquifer System – STAS (Botswana, Namibia and South Africa),
- the Trifinio Aquifers Complex (El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala).

GGRETA PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

The main goal of the project is to enhance cooperation on water security, prevent transboundary and water-use conflicts, and improve overall environmental sustainability. The project aims to reinforce the capacity of Member States in managing groundwater resources; strengthen cooperation among countries sharing the aquifer; and develop a long term strategy for the monitoring and governance of the transboundary aquifer.

The overall project’s objectives and main achievements are as follows:

- **Improve the knowledge and recognition of the importance and vulnerability of transboundary groundwater resources:**
 - Detailed assessment reports representative of hydrogeological, socio-economic and environmental, gender, and legal and institutional conditions and settings finalized
 - Application of an indicator-based methodology as a tool able to summarise in a nutshell a number of important aspects of the system considered and bring them under attention of decision-makers, planners and other stakeholders.

- **Strengthen cross-border dialogue and cooperation:**
 - Trainings in water diplomacy tailored to technical experts and ministries representatives focusing on trust building, conflict prevention and resolution, cooperation and negotiation have proven to be extremely useful to support the process of collaboration in all three case studies.
 - Training seminars on legal and institutional aspects of water governance covering international to domestic perspective have been realized in the three case studies. Seminars included training not only in international water law, but also on the linkages between international legal obligations and domestic water legislation. As a result, participants (technical experts, and ministries representatives) were exposed to the underpinnings of the management of water resources at the transboundary level, including compliance and the implementation of national water legislation.
- **Develop shared management tools:**
 - An Information Management System (IMS) has been developed and is operational in the three case studies. The IMS will act as a platform for countries to store and exchange information (maps, tables, meta information) and experience on transboundary aquifer management.
 - A major achievement of the current phase is the creation of a joint database containing water level and water chemistry of around 6000 boreholes for the Stampriet case study.
- **Facilitate governance reforms focused on improving livelihoods, economic development and environmental sustainability:**
 - Presentation of two options for the establishment of a Consultative Mechanism aimed at facilitating cooperation for the management and governance of the STAS.
 - Gender sensitive data was collected in the field and will provide substantial information of innovative topics, such as women and men's roles in water decision-making, water use, irrigation techniques.

FINAL AGENDA

DAY 1 • Tuesday, 15 December 2015 - Room XIV (Miollis Building)

Objectives

- To present the first phase of GGRETA project main findings;
- To underpin the role of science in decision making in the context of transboundary aquifer cooperation;
- To discuss the role of emerging legal instruments in the management of transboundary aquifers;
- To explore the value of water and the role it plays in transboundary aquifer cooperation.

09:30- 12h30	Morning session (Room XIV, Miollis Building)
09:30-10:30	Opening of the meeting
	<p>Chair of the session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Ms Alice Aureli, Chief of Section of Groundwater Systems and Human Settlements, UNESCO International Hydrological Programme (UNESCO-IHP)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Ms Blanca Jiménez-Cisneros, Director of the Division of Water Sciences, Secretary of the International Hydrological Programme, UNESCO</i> • Opening Statements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>H.E. Ms Frieda Nangula Ithete, Permanent Delegate of Namibia to UNESCO, <u>Presidency of the 38th UNESCO General Conference, Ambassador</u></i> ▪ <i>H.E. Mr Jean-Frederic Jauslin, Permanent Delegate of Swiss Confederation to UNESCO, Ambassador</i> • Statements by Delegates of the Project Countries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>H.E. Ms. Lorena Sol de Pool, Permanent Delegate of El Salvador to UNESCO, Ambassador</i> ▪ <i>H.E. Mr Marco Tulio Chicas Sosa, Permanent Delegate of Guatemala to UNESCO, Ambassador</i> ▪ <i>H.E. Mr Roberto A. Ramírez Aldana, Permanent Delegate of Honduras to UNESCO, Ambassador</i> ▪ <i>Mr Satybaldy Bursahkov, on behalf of H.E. Mr Nurlan Danenov, Permanent Delegate of Kazakhstan to UNESCO, Ambassador</i> • Introduction of the participants and adoption of the agenda
10:30-10:45	Coffee break

10:45-11:45	Presentation of the “Groundwater Resources Governance in Transboundary Aquifers (GGRETA)” project
	<p>Chair of the session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Mr Youssef Filali-Meknassi, Science Programme Specialist, UNESCO Office in Windhoek</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives and Main achievements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Ms Alice Aureli, UNESCO-IHP</i> • Multidisciplinary Assessment Methodology and GGRETA Information Management System (IMS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Mr Neno Kukuric, Director, UNESCO Category 2 Centre, International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre (IGRAC)</i> <p>Questions and Answers</p>
11:45 – 12:30	Statements from National and Regional Authorities
	<p>Chair of the session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Youssef Filali-Meknassi, UNESCO Windhoek</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Mr Obolokile Obakeng, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Minerals, Energy and Water Resources, Focal Point for the UNESCO-IHP National Committee, Botswana</i> ▪ <i>Ms Maria Amakali, Director: Water Resource Management, Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, Namibia</i> ▪ <i>Mr Phera Ramoeli, Director, Water Division Infrastructure and Services, Southern African Development Community (SADC)</i> ▪ <i>Mr Khahliso Leketa, Orange-Senqu River Commission (ORASECOM)</i> ▪ <i>Ms Celina Mena, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (Ministerio de Ambiente y Recursos Naturales, MARN), Focal Point for the National Committee for UNESCO-IHP, El Salvador</i> ▪ <i>Mr Rolando Alberto, Trinacional Technical Director, Representative of Plan Trifinio</i> <p>Discussion</p>
12:30-14:30	Lunch

14:30-17:30	Afternoon session (Room XIV, Miollis Building) Chair of the session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Youssef Filali-Meknassi, UNESCO Windhoek</i>
14:30-15:30	Presentation of the “Stampriet Transboundary Aquifer System (STAS)” case study main findings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results of the aquifer multi-disciplinary assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Mr Piet Kenabatho, Assessment Report Coordinator, University of Botswana</i> <p>Discussion</p>
15:30-16:30	Presentation of the “Trifinio Aquifers Complex” case study main findings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General context of the case study and groundwater governance issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Mr Andrea Merla, Senior Advisor, UNESCO-IHP</i> • Results of the different components of the multi-disciplinary aquifer assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Mr Carlos Rosal, Local Case Study Coordinator , International Union for the Conservation of the Nature (IUCN)</i> <p>Discussion</p>
16:30-17:00	Coffee break
17:00-17:30	Reactions to GGRETA project findings
	<p>Chair of the session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Youssef Filali-Meknassi, UNESCO Windhoek</i> <p>Reactions to GGRETA project findings and way forward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General discussion and feedback <p>Discussion</p> <p>Closing remarks of the day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Alice Aureli, UNESCO-IHP</i>
18:00 - 19:30	Cocktail – All participants (Room Ségur, 7th Floor Fontenoy Building)

DAY 2 • Wednesday, 16 December 2015 - Rooms XIII, XIV, XV (Miollis Building)

Objectives

- **Plenary session:** Presentation of the main objectives of the proposal for GGRETA second phase
- **Parallel sessions:** Discussions among members of the Permanent Delegations to UNESCO, government officials, representatives of regional organisations and technical teams - feedback about GGRETA first phase , guidance and recommendations for second phase

9:30-10:10	Presentation of the “Pretashkent Aquifer” case study main findings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the multi-disciplinary aquifer assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Mr Suren Gevinian, Case study Coordinator, UNESCO-IHP</i> • Results of the different components of the multi-disciplinary aquifer assessment in Kazakhstan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Mr Oleg Podolny, National Coordinator, Kazakhstan</i> • Benefit sharing and lessons learnt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Ms Valentina Salybekova, Case study Expert, Kazakhstan</i> <p>Discussion</p>
10:10-10:30	Presentation of gender data main findings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator-based gender assessment methodology • Preliminary issues and lessons learnt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Ms Francesca Greco, Gender and Water Focal Point, UNESCO World Water Assessment Programme (UNESCO WWAP)</i> <p>Discussion</p>
10:30-10:40	Preliminary models of Multi-Country Cooperation Mechanisms (MCCM)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Mr Stefano Burchi, UNESCO-IHP</i>
10:40-11:00	Water cooperation workshop results
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Mr Ralph Mahfoud, UNESCO-IHP</i>
11:00-11:30	Coffee break
11:30-12:30	Parallel sessions – Stampriet, Trifinio and Pretashkent Case studies Working groups (Rooms XIII, XIV and XV, Miollis Building)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reactions to the integrated assessment findings of each case study • Recommendations for project’s potential next phase • Preparation of a report for the Plenary Session
12:30-14:30	Lunch

14:30- 16:30	Afternoon session
14:30-16:30	Plenary Session - Reactions to GGRETA project and way forward
	<p>Chair of the session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Youssef Filali-Meknassi, UNESCO Windhoek</i> • Reports from the Rapporteurs of parallel sessions • General discussion and feedback

Parallel sessions – Chairs and UNESCO-IHP support		
Room XIV – Miollis Building	Stampriet	Chair: <i>Mr Youssef Filali-Meknassi</i> Support: <i>Ms Fernanda Ferreira De Freitas</i>
Room XIII – Miollis Building	Trifinio	Chair: <i>Mr Andrea Merla</i> Support: <i>Mr Aurélien Dumont</i>
Room XV – Fontenoy Building	Pretashkent	Chairs: <i>Mr Suren Gevinian and Ms Natalia Kim</i> Support: <i>Ms Irina Pavlova</i>