



# IWRA Annual General Assembly

2<sup>nd</sup> June 2017 15:30-17:00 CTZ

## Minutes



### Speakers:

Patrick Lavarde	President	PL
Guy Fradin	Secretary General	GF
Renée Martin-Nagle	Treasurer	RMN
Gary Jones	Membership Committee Chair	GJ
Henning Bjornlund	Publication Committee Chair	HB
James (Jim) Nickum	Awards Committee Chair/ Editor-in-Chief, WI	JN
Gabriel Eckstein	ISC Chair	GE
Callum Clench	Executive Director	CC
Alice Colson	Project Officer	AC
Ignacio Deregibus	Communications Officer	ID
Nick Schofield	Director of Global Water Institute	NS

### Location:

Cancun International Convention Centre and streamed via GoToWebinar

#### 1. Welcoming Remarks

The general assembly began with opening remarks from Patrick Lavarde, the President of the IWRA Executive Board. He warmly welcomed new and old members of the IWRA, and thanked participants for the successful XVI World Water Congress. It was acknowledged that the Congress setting offered a unique opportunity to bring together members, board members and the executive office to discuss IWRA activities, and in years between congresses, a virtual annual meeting will be held for regular discussions with members dispersed around the world via GoToWebinar.

#### 2. Executive Office Update

##### 2.1 New Executive Office

##### Discussion:

- **GF:** A brief introduction of the updated Executive Office was given, with a change in Executive Director from Tom Soo to Callum Clench. Additionally, there was a

new set of Executive Board members at the start of 2016. Following the closure of IWRA's former host VERSeau in Montpellier in 2015, a new location for the Executive Office had to be chosen, and the board decided to relocate the office to Nanterre in early 2016, where it is now being hosted by l'Agence de l'Eau Seine Normandie.

- **CC:** An introduction of the Executive Office team:
  - Alice Colson: project officer, for the past 15 months, who does much more than just project work and keeps the office running as well.
  - Ignacio Deregibus: communications officer, who has also become the de facto Congress Officer in the lead up to the XVI World Water Congress.
  - Two interns: Heather Bond and Mathylde Caffa

Due to the small size of the Executive Office, all team members are required to support all aspects of the operation of this association and we depend on and appreciate their hard work.

## 2.2 Website Update

### Discussion:

- **ID:** We are launching the new website. It is more interactive and has a fresher look, with high-resolution images, using a more flexible platform. Phase 2 of the update will be refreshing the membership space to make it more intuitive and useful for members, better facilitating access to member only material, networking opportunities and working groups. We are very open to your feedback; if you have other ideas please let us know, as the website is something for all of us.
- **Salman Salman (SS):** A couple of years back I suggested including past board members.
- **AC:** This has been included and can be found on the Executive Board page: <http://www.iwra.org/executive-board/> . We are also considering including this as a document that you can download. The history of our association is important to us.

## 3 Technical Activities Update

### 3.1 Technical Activities

#### Discussion:

- **CC:** We will continue to lead on the "Water Quality" topic under the "Ecosystems" theme at the next World Water Forum in Brasilia, as well as to participate on the topic coordination group for the "Science Policy Interface" under the "Climate Change" theme, and the thematic coordination group for the cross-cutting theme of "Capacity". We are counting on our members to help with input for these activities.
- **CC:** We have signed a MoU with K-water on "Smart Water Management" (SWM). We will be examining case studies from all around the world to see how SWM is being implemented and how to scale it up or down. We hope that our members will be able to help us source case studies for inclusion in this important study.

- **CC:** IWRA also signed a MoU with ICID (International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage), and are aiming to work together on policy guidance for water in agriculture.
- **CC:** Late in 2016, IWRA signed a MoU with the Asia Water Council and were pleased to welcome representatives here to Cancun as a result. We look forward to participating in their Asia Water Week in Korea later this year.
- **CC:** IWRA is keen to sign MoUs with other organizations to find ways to better collaborate, with a focus on identifying operational and practical projects that we can do together.
- **Lilian del Castillo Laborde:** I was working with the water quality report from the World Water Forum and would like to know if it was concluded or what happened next with it?
- **CC:** It still needs to be published; the steering committee needs to review it. It is 99% ready but just needs the final sign off.
- **PL:** It is not possible to ask the Executive Office to do everything. We need to find operational projects, launched with other members, like what we did with K-water. For example, after the “Water Quality from Source to Sea” special session held here in Cancun, we discussed with the president of AIDA, Stefano Burchi, the possibility of making a survey on the governments and financial issues on policies regarding freshwater and oceans. We are always open to such possibilities, and want our members to get more involved as a result.

### 3.2 Publications

#### Discussion:

- **HB:** The publications committee developed a strategy for IWRA which was approved in 2016. It has a focus on publications that support the main topics that IWRA is currently involved in, such as “Water Quality and the “Science-Policy Interface” which was the main theme of the XVI World Water Congress. The aim is to focus our attention on projects led by IWRA and on themes for special issues of *Water International*, which often result in Policy Briefs, webinars and books.
- **JN:** IWRA’s journal *Water International* (WI) has expanded from 7 to 8 issues a year, and there are a couple new members of the editorial team, such as Nicholas Griffin who has been brought on as the new Policy Brief Editor.
- **JN:** The last couple years have produced quite a few special issues and we have 7 or 8 special issues on the pipeline. We expect to be able to produce a special issue based on the AIDA session from this Congress, and we are open to interesting papers coming out of the congress for open issues. Please send them to us. These thematic issues are important in generating interest, as indicated, for example in the impact factor, which looks like it will increase again in the latest numbers [the subsequently released 2016 Web of Science IF did increase by over 50% over 2015.].

- **JN:** Our open issues changed to online submission in 2016. Submissions have increased to around 260 per year, and of those we accept around 25 to 30. My sense is that the quality of these papers is also going up, possibly due to the rise in the impact factor.
- **JN:** We are reviving the Policy Briefs, which have been based on selected Special Issues of WI, but will evolve to also include interesting topics based on collections of individual papers. To make Policy Briefs more attractive, we are adding photographs from co-editors and authors. We are hoping, as well, to create thematic photo galleries linked through the IWRA website so that members who have photos can share them too.
- **Tom Soo:** A proposal for consideration: there are only a few journals that focus on water policy, including WI, and if each of these journals summarized their main policy messages every year, we could have a critical mass of what water policy managers have been thinking– an almanac of water policy.

#### 4 Amendment to the IWRA Constitution

##### Discussion:

- **GF:** We have reviewed and renewed the basic text of the association, the Constitution and the By-Laws. This work was led by Doğan Altınbilek, Lillian del Castillo Laborde, and Renée Martin-Nagle.
- **RMN:** IWRA was incorporated in Wisconsin, in the United States in the 1970s. The “Constitution” from 1987 is our legal document under which we are still operating. At its last meeting, the Executive Board voted to amend the “Constitution” to create new “Articles of Incorporation” (AoI) in order to bring our governing document up to date and ensure compliance with the current rules in the state of Wisconsin and the US tax authority. In the process, we have made a clearer distinction between the AoI, which establishes our legal status, and the By-Laws, which set out how we operate, a distinction that the 1987 Constitution blurred.
- **RMN:** The next step is that the new AoI must be approved by the membership. Members will soon receive an email from the Executive Office asking them to vote to approve the new Articles of Incorporation.
- **RMN:** In addition, to approving new AoI, the Executive Board, at its meeting on 28 May 2017, also voted unanimously to adopt new bylaws which came into effect immediately. Unlike the AoI, the By-Laws can be approved by the Executive Board alone, provided that the membership benefits are not reduced. The amendments primarily affected the organization and operation of the Executive Board, and the main difference for members is that they may now appoint a proxy for voting purposes. The Bylaws created a Governance Committee that is empowered to implement decisions of the Executive Board and Board members may now serve two terms in the same role instead of just one, in order to help avoid loss of institutional memory every three years.
- **JN:** Is it 2 terms on the same position?

- **RMN:** Previously, you could serve one term in a position but then you needed to change positions to stay at the board. The new By-Laws allow for two consecutive terms in the same position. You would then need to step aside from this position, but could run for election to other positions, and could reapply for the same role in a later Board election.

## 5 IWRA 2016 Financial Activities

### Discussion:

- **RMN:** The IWRA is in a good stable position financially, but we run on a shoestring. We are a small organization that gets a lot done on a very small budget, thanks to the hard work of our Executive Office, Executive Board and support from members. The bulk of our income derives from fees paid by the hosts of each World Water Congress. Other income comes from sponsorship, publication royalties, project agreements and membership fees, but these items and activities account for a smaller proportion. The World Water Congress is therefore critical to our operational budget, and it is normal for us to have more expenses than income in non-congress years. The bulk of expenses are for staff and work-related travel.
- **SS:** How many members do we have?
- **RMN:** About 700 members, including non-fee-paying students.
- **PL:** It will increase a lot this year, because we will have recruited around 800 more members from the Congress. While this is important, the Congress is still our main source of income.
- **JN:** To clarify on the membership fees structure, the indicated payment for WI is for printed copies; every member receives online versions.

## 6 Membership Strategy and Working Groups

### 6.1 Membership Strategy

#### Discussion:

- **CC:** As a membership based organization, members are core to who we are. The way that membership organizations have evolved since 1971 is significant, as we live in a very different world now in terms of communications, publishing and networking technology, so we have to think of how to attract members. For example, our recent Facebook campaign has been successful in attracting new student members. What we need to think about now is how to convert our student members into young professional members, (i.e. anybody under 35 years of age no longer in fulltime education).

**CC:** This new membership strategy looks not only at finding new members, but also at retaining existing members by reviewing the way that we engage with them. The strategy objectives include:

- 1- Strengthening IWRA Membership
- 2- Strengthening and extending IWRA regional chapters
- 3- Enhancing member participation with IWRA activities

**CC:** Raising awareness on our brand and strengthening IWRA regional chapters are key to the strategy. The approach is to better support existing chapters, and to establish more regional chapters: currently there are chapters in Japan, Oceania, China, and India, with proposed chapters in Korea, Mexico and South America.

**CC:** Another element we are looking into is greater engagement with members on a thematic basis. We are proposing to set up a number of thematic working groups: initially focussed on “science-policy interface”, “water governance” and “water quality”, in line with on-going projects.

**CC:** We are also thinking about how to increase the effectiveness of our presence on social media. We want to raise interest among our members and adopt new ways of communicating and engaging with them. This is why we now have a fulltime communications officer.

- **PL:** The word missing here is institutions: we have individual members, now we want to recruit more institutions. Institutions are a good way to establish capacity to support finances and projects.
- **GJ:** How do we fully engage and ask members to participate? How do we get people to participate? What’s next for members? If you have any ideas contact the Membership Committee via the Executive Office.
- **RMN:** In the new bylaws, we have created a new award, the Water Drop, for young professionals, hoping to better engage them.

## 6.2 Regional Chapters

### Discussion:

- **CC:** We are developing welcome packs for new members to support membership recruitment both at chapter level and generally. These will help new members to more clearly understand what their benefits and opportunities are as members of IWRA, both for individual members and also for institutional and organisational members.

Today the director of the Global Water Institute at the University of New South Wales, Nick Schofield, has come from Australia to sign a revised MoU for the Oceania Chapter, as his institution takes over the management of this chapter.

**NS:** The Oceania Chapter is an institution member and we have 500 individuals involved. I don’t think that in being an institution member all these individuals

have so far been getting the most out of IWRA membership. In our region of the world, we are hosted by the Global Water Institute (GWI), and we want to create a chapter that will actively work on expanding its membership base through a variety of means, including the design of interesting events/activities, and working closely with the Executive Office and Board for guidance.

- **PL:** We welcome this initiative and look forward to working with the GWI to create a stronger presence in the region.

**Action:**

- **Signing of the Oceania Chapter MoU.**

### **6.3 Youth Activities**

**Discussion:**

- **AC:** We are actively working to ensure that we have better representation by our young professional and student members on our various committees and working groups, as well as in our chapters. This will include setting up a steering committee focussed on young professionals.
- **PL:** It is the first time that young professional groups have come together at a World Water Congress through the “Ambassador Programme” and in organizing special sessions and talks.
- **AC:** We are also pleased to have the youth delegates from the World Water Council in our membership; this will be a great opportunity for them and us.

### **6.4 Final Questions or Comments**

**Discussion:**

- **Philip Gichuki:** The Nairobi Water and Sewerage Company is very much interested in participating in IWRA activities. We would be happy to host some events in Nairobi and collaborate on projects relating to water quality and water management.
- **PL:** I would be pleased to discuss these possibilities when I come to Nairobi in July.
- **GF:** Conclusion of the meeting.