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**Secretary of the International Hydrological Programme  
Director, a.i. of the Division of Water Sciences**

To : IHP National Committees

Ref: SC/WATER/30

11 January 2011

Subject: Detailed Discussion with Member States on the Formulation of the  
Eighth Phase of IHP (IHP-VIII, 2014-2019)

Dear Sir / Madam,

The objective of this letter is to solicit, as mandated by the 19<sup>th</sup> session of the Intergovernmental Council of the IHP (July 2010), your detailed input into the formulation of the Eighth Phase of IHP (2014-2019).

### **Institutional Background**

As you may recall, the 43<sup>rd</sup> session of the IHP Bureau (June 2009) initiated the preparation of the Eighth Phase of IHP, by requesting that the Secretariat establishes a task force from experts in various water-related disciplines coming from various regions to work on this process. A subsequent planning meeting was held in January (2010) and resulted in the formulation of the task force along with its Terms of Reference. The Task Force held an initial teleconference (23 April 2010), in which a first set of ideas was outlined for presentation to the 44<sup>th</sup> session of the IHP Bureau.

At its 44<sup>th</sup> session, the IHP Bureau discussed at length the outcomes of the Task Force teleconference held on 23 April 2010 and provided further guidance for the preparation of the concept note. Subsequently, the first meeting of the IHP-VIII Task Force was held on 19-21 May 2010 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris with the participation of the IHP Secretariat team. During the two and a half days meeting, the Task Force produced a concept note outlining its vision that was aligned with the recommendations of the 43<sup>rd</sup> and 44<sup>th</sup> sessions of the IHP Bureau. The concept note presented four Knowledge Areas as the main drivers of hydrologic and water resources issues during IHP-VIII, along with four cross-cutting areas. The draft concept note was then presented to the IHP Bureau for an out-of-session review and endorsement.

The IHP Bureau held a teleconference on 31 May 2010 with participation of the coordinator of the Task Force and of members of the Secretariat. Members of the Bureau commented on the draft concept note and provided recommendations to the Task Force, primarily on the need to consider water scarcity, and to streamline the knowledge area and emphasize innovations.

The Bureau also requested the Task Force to undertake, with the assistance of the Secretariat the production of a summary document representing the synergy of the vision of the Task Force with the comments from the Bureau and to present the document for endorsement by the 19<sup>th</sup> session of the Intergovernmental Council of IHP as the basis for detailed consultations with Member States and other stakeholders. The Task Force, assisted by the Secretariat, produced the summary concept note presented in Annex 1.

Reflecting the Bureau guidelines, the aim of the summary concept note is to provide elements to stimulate this detailed consultation with Member States (and solicit their responses, but not to serve, in any way, as a rigid framework limiting the possibility of exploring new directions. The paper represents what the Task Force as a group perceived as major drivers of hydrologic and water resources issues for the next phase of IHP.

The summary concept note (Annex 1) was presented to the 19<sup>th</sup> session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council. While the Council was unanimous in its strong appreciation of the efforts made by the Task Force (Annex 2), several members of the Council highlighted the adverse impacts of water scarcity on sustainable development, especially in arid and semi-arid regions, and encouraged the Task Force to include water scarcity as a key area within IHP-VIII.

In addition, the need to consider (a) both floods and droughts as equally important extreme events; (b) water quality as a challenge deserving serious consideration; (c) climate change as a cross-cutting issue that affects all four key knowledge areas presented by the task force; d) education; (e) linkage between the technical and ethical aspects of water resources management; and (f) coastal zones, wetlands, and nutrient recycling, as well as non-conventional water resources augmentation technology, such as desalinization and water harvesting.

Many delegates also expressed strong satisfaction at the fact that groundwater is being considered a high priority challenge by the Task Force. The Council endorsed the summary concept paper as a basis for discussion with the Member States during the detailed consultation on the provision that it would not limit the scope of the consultations or the ability of Member States and partners to propose new thrusts or emphases other than those included in the concept note or its summary. It must also be mentioned that discussion of IHP-VIII during the 19<sup>th</sup> session of the IHP Intergovernmental Council also took place in the context of several other reports from the Secretariat as illustrated in the final report, which is now available in all six official UNESCO languages at the following addresses:

English: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001884/188477e.pdf>

French: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001884/188477f.pdf>

Spanish: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001884/188477s.pdf>

Russian: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001884/188477r.pdf>

Arabic: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001884/188477a.pdf>

Chinese: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001884/188477c.pdf>

## **Method of Consultation**

The attached survey (Annex 3), intends to solicit your input for the formulation of the Eighth Phase of IHP. The survey was designed with the notion that Member States, while benefiting from the initial efforts of the Task Force by using the summary concept note endorsed by the Council to stimulate discussion, should not be limited, in any way, by what the Task Force has considered as the 4 key drivers and 4 cross-cutting areas of water issues in the next 10 years. At this stage of the formulation, we are seeking from your country what you consider as priorities and key drivers of water issues at both country and regional levels. As stated in the revised timeline for formulation of IHP-VIII (Annex 4), the results of this detailed consultation will be thoroughly analyzed by the Secretariat and the Task Force and will form the basis for the development of an extended outline of the strategic plan (Annex 4).

Please note that the summary concept note, which was endorsed by the Intergovernmental Council of IHP is available as a Council document (IHP/IC-XIX/10) in the following languages

English: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001883/188342E.pdf>  
French: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001883/188342F.pdf>  
Spanish: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001883/188342S.pdf>  
Russian: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001883/188342R.pdf>  
Arabic: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001883/188342A.pdf>  
Chinese: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001883/188342C.pdf>

If you may wish, the full-length concept note, which was presented in out-of-session meeting of the IHP Bureau is available as IHP/IC-XIX/Inf.13-Annex IV in the following languages

English: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001881/188159E.pdf>  
French: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001881/188159f.pdf>

**What we request from you at this moment:**

We would very much appreciate your prompt response to our invitation to participate in this survey. Please review the attached summary concept note as endorsed by the Council, and then fill the attached survey (Annex 3) and return it to the IHP Secretariat by 28 February 2011. As you may note, the timeline is rather compressed and your prompt response would be greatly appreciated.

Please submit your response by email to the IHP Secretariat ([ihp@unesco.org](mailto:ihp@unesco.org)). You may also submit your reply by fax [+33 (0)1 45 68 58 11] or by mailing it to the IHP Secretariat.

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I look forward to your reply, trusting that you will accept my sincerest gratitude.

Best regards,



J. Alberto Tejada-Guibert