

SCOPING PAPER FOR THEME 6, TOPIC 5

Water and Culture

Theme	6. Education, Knowledge and Capacity Building
Topic	6.5 Water and Culture
Main Question	How can cultural diversity be integrated into water resources management?
Related sub-questions	<p><i>Question 1: What kind of opportunities and challenges does cultural diversity offer for sustainable water resources management?</i></p> <p><i>Question 2: How can knowledge of historical dimensions and past water management practices contribute to solving today's water problems?</i></p> <p><i>Question 3: What are the appropriate strategies and next steps to mainstream cultural diversity in water management, sciences, policy making and capacity building?</i></p> <p><i>Question 4: What kind of information, knowledge and outputs do we need in order to mainstream cultural diversity in water management and policies in the future?</i></p>
<u>General introduction</u>	<p>The proposed sessions address the overarching concept of the WWF5, "Bridging Divides for Water", and are relevant to all the themes and topics identified for the Forum, in particular adaptation to climate change, multiple uses of water, preservation of ecosystems, empowerment of stakeholders, and pro-poor policies and strategies. There is a lack of integration of cultural factors in water resource management and policy across these themes and topics. In order to redress this gap, it is necessary to provide space for multi-level discussions and the development of innovative tools, guidelines, methodologies and solutions on how to integrate cultural diversity in water management and policies. These interdisciplinary sessions on Water and Culture will translate the important ideas to a wider audience and form a basis for launching a global movement towards the mainstreaming of cultural diversity in water issues.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Sustainably managing water resources is crucial to attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); indeed it is water that cuts through and connects the eight MDGs. In order to manage water in a sustainable manner, it is necessary to address the complexity of issues surrounding water, which includes not only the natural scientific and engineering approaches that have dominated water resources management, but also social, cultural, economic and political dimensions.</p> <p>The theme Water and Cultural Diversity has recently received much attention in the international realm. Although many now agree that water resources management that does not incorporate social dimensions is not sustainable, interdisciplinary and systematic analyses of the relationships between cultural diversity and water, and their implications for sustainable management of water resources, are still lacking. Thus, there is an urgent need to understand, identify and analyse the challenges and opportunities cultural diversity offers for sustainable management of water resources, in order to mainstream cultural diversity in water management practices and policies.</p> <p><i>Resulting Question 1: What kind of opportunities and challenges does cultural diversity offer for sustainable water resources management?</i></p> <p>In order to address this demand, comprehensive and systematic assessment of</p>

	<p>research and case studies on the topic of water and cultural diversity, and linking worldwide activities dealing with this topic, are necessary. In order to examine in-depth and to systematically analyse the relationships between water and cultural diversity, the following four focal areas have been identified:</p> <p>Focal area 1: Diversity of cultural meanings, values and perceptions of water Focal area 2: Cultural practices and technologies that affect water Focal area 3: Social, cultural, political and institutional aspects that govern water use Focal area 4: Collaboration and conflict related to uses, access and control over water</p> <hr/> <p>Knowledge systems, practices and values related to water have evolved throughout history and have greatly contributed to shaping civilizations past and present. Settlements, food, politics, laws and religion have always been closely tied to societies' interactions with water. By tracing these developments through historical research, it is possible to understand experiences of the past and lessons to be learned, thus offering clues for sustainable development.</p> <p><i>Resulting Question 2: How can knowledge of historical dimensions and past water management practices contribute to solving today's water problems?</i></p> <hr/> <p>In order to find sustainable solutions to water problems, any decisions made or research conducted in water should be based on a deep understanding of the myriad interactions between people and water. Such interactions go beyond human uses of water such as drinking, washing, and fishing. It also goes beyond examining water – people relations in the framework of environmental services provided by water such as food, recreation and aesthetic values. It is important to foster socio-cultural perspectives in water sciences, promote cultural pluralism in water management strategies, and thereby contribute to the development of culturally sensitive methodologies and policies on water. Water resources management that does not incorporate these dimensions is not complete and cannot be sustainable. There is thus an urgent need to mainstream cultural diversity in water management practices and policies.</p> <p><i>Resulting Question 3: What are appropriate strategies and next steps to mainstream cultural diversity in water management, sciences, policy making and capacity building?</i></p> <hr/> <p>Building bridges and stimulating exchanges between contrasting perspectives, as envisaged by the Forum, requires that all disciplines, all stakeholders, all regions and all cultures are invited to be a part of this process. Much research, particularly case studies, has been conducted in the recent years. However, a tremendous knowledge gap in the field of water and cultural diversity remains. Knowledge that goes beyond pure case studies and descriptive research is needed. Applicable recommendations and solutions are required. Once cultural diversity is widely recognized in water management, sciences, policy making and capacity building innovative tools and methodologies will be needed to actually mainstream cultural diversity into water management and policies.</p> <p><i>Resulting Question 4: What kind of information, knowledge and outputs do we need in order to mainstream cultural diversity in water management and policies in the future?</i></p>
(Types of) Organizations to be involved in topic consultations	<p>National Centres of Excellence: Istanbul Water and Sewerage Administration (ISKI), Centre for Political Ecology; IHP Turkish National Committee</p> <p>International Agencies: UNESCO-IHP, UNU-IAS</p> <p>International Professional Networks: International Water and History Association (IWHA), International Water Association (IWA), International Association of Hydraulic</p>

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	<p>Resesarch (IAHR), International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS)</p> <p>Research institutions: Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN); Cranfield University; University of North Texas; Chinese Academy of Sciences</p> <p>NGOs: Farmer Managed Irrigation Systems Promotion Trust</p>
Process of paper and session development:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Draft 1 of topic scoping paper to be sent to key institutions for comments2. Improved draft to be placed on website/included in announcements3. Call for session participation and selection of candidates4. Collaborative work to develop sessions, such as through a pre-forum symposium and interactive public session at Expo Zaragoza 2008