MINUTES FOR THE 28th MEETING OF THE
EUROPEAN REGIONAL WORKING GROUP (ERWG)
7 October 2022, 08:45-10:30 hours (Session-I)
7 October 2022, 11:15-13:00 hours (Session-II)
Adelaide, Australia
Presented by the Chairman

Year of Establishment: 1995

Mandate: The mission of ERWG is to promote awareness about critical ICID relevant water issues at all levels in Europe and to pay special attention to the environmentally sustainable water management in Europe.

Members Present: (1) VPH Dr. Marco Arciero, Interim Chair (Italy); (2) VPH Dr. Laszlo Hayde (Hungary); and (3) Dr. Sami Bourfa (France) represented by Vice President Bruno Grawitz

Observers: (i) President Hon. Peter S. Lee (UK); (ii) VPH Ian Makin (UK); and (iii) President Hon. Prof. Bart Schultz (The Netherlands).

Meeting attended virtually: VPH Dr. Irene Bondarik (Russia).

Website: http://icid-ciid.org/inner_page/106

ERWG Minutes Item 1: Action Taken Report by Chair

1. Due to the impact of Ukraine-Russia conflict, RWG Chair VPH Irena Bondarik (Russia), by her own will, stepped down as the chair of ERWG and VPH Marco Arcieri (Italy) was assigned responsibility of the RWG as its Interim Chair. The working group supported Irena’s decision to step down as the chair and noted this as a gracious action. The ERWG appreciated and gratitude to Dr. Irena Bondarik for all the work that she has done for the RWG and ICID. In the next ICID meeting there will be an appreciation to be given to Irena for all her efforts. The new Chair Dr. Marco thanked Secretary General for starting the meeting and RWG adopted VPH Dr. Marco as the new Chair of the ERWG.

1. The Chair presented the report on the actions taken on the decisions and proposals of the European Regional Working Group at its 27th meeting held on 27 November 2021. The membership of Spain to join ICID and the ERWG was discussed in the meeting and Spain was welcome as a member of the RWG.

ERWG Minutes Item 1.1: Strengthening the membership in Europe

2. The current active members of the RWG are Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, The Netherlands, Ukraine, and United Kingdom. NCs who have either withdrawn or are Associate members are Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Lithuania, Macedonia, Poland, Serbia, Slovenia, and Switzerland.

3. RWG noted that The Netherlands National Committee of ICID (NETHID), founding member of ICID, communicated vide their letter dated 10 June 2022 that they feel obliged to suspend the NETHCID activities for the time being for the reasons such as the number of active members has declined drastically in recent years and due to the rise of online meeting platforms, digital journal access and easily available professional information. Thus, the added value of NETHCID membership has decreased over the past years. According to them, these issues are neither new nor unique to NETHCID, but several European National Committees who are struggling with the similar problems, in particular those without government support. RWG suggested that ICID CO keep following-up with NETHCID. The Netherlands NC has not been paying the membership fees for two years and approached ICID Central Office to postpone the payment of the membership until the reorganization of the National Committee is done.

4. The President of Hungary National Committee passed away earlier in 2022, accordingly NC is under reorganization. The current contact person is VPH Dr. Laszlo Hayde.

5. The new chair of French National Committee Dr. Sami Bourfa and young professional Mr. Evgenii Ratkovitch (Russia) introduced themselves as a new member of the RWG. RWG welcomed some new young professionals who joined from UK Water irrigation forum.

6. RWG noted and appreciated efforts of the ICID CO for approaching Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Lithuania, Macedonia, Poland, Serbia, Slovak Republic & Switzerland to reactivate/renew their membership by becoming member of ICID once again and noted the interest of Poland National...
Committee of ICID in reviving the membership of the ICID. ERWG also noted that ICID Central Office has approached the countries of Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia- Herzegovina, Denmark, Iceland, Kosovo, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Norway, San Marino through their Ministry of Water Resources / Agriculture to join the membership of ICID.

7. During the Water Digest Conference held on 27 July 2022 Mr. Asheesh Agrawal, Senior Market Adviser of Norwegian Embassy met Secretary General Er. Ashwin B. Pandya and discussed the issue of exchange of information about the activities in India. In this regard, ICID CO has shared a letter of membership with Mr. Asheesh Agrawal.

8. There was some discussion about the membership fee that can be difficult for some NCs to collect if there is no support from their respective governments. This can cause some countries to end their membership. The WG discussed how to strengthen the current membership in European countries and concerns among the various NCs represented at the meeting. The members of the WG noted the effort of the Central Office to reach out to the potential member countries and the indications of interest from a few countries.

9. There was discussion about promoting the activities and events in Europe as only thing that is now promote is news and views. It was seemed beneficial to promote national activities to other national committees as well.

10. France is trying to attract not individual members, but organizations related to irrigation and drainage field. France is organizing a yearly virtual workshop that could be opened to other national committees of ERWG.

11. The RWG decided to commit to organize one regional working group workshop every two years (virtual or hybrid mode). This will be initiated by listing topics that are interesting for European working group members (Climate change, extreme events, land use changes). Based on the list RWG will draft a program for the workshops. Dr. Bourfa (France) has agreed to oversee drafting the list. Membership status is given in Annex 3 (page 29).

ERWG Minutes Item 2: Road Map to ICID Vision 2030 – Status of Activities relevant to European Region

12. The Action Plan (Road Map to ICID Vision 2030) was reviewed within the context of discussions of the various items in the WG. RWG members reaffirmed that focus areas of the RM remain under three goals such as: (1) Strategy B1: Supporting Development of Appropriate Policies: Disseminate the policy paper within ICID; (2) Strategy C3: Prompting Regional Cooperation: Preparation of ICID Europe – brochures (one for use towards Ministries and other institutions and another to attract Young Professionals and others to take part in ICID activities); and (iii) Strategy F1: Enhancing Institutions Capacity Development in Member Countries: Sharing online NC’s work programmes and activities. The updated Road Map of the RWG as referred Annex-2 in the Agenda of ERWG.

ERWG Minutes Item 3: Seminar/Session related to Agricultural Water Management in Europe

13. RWG noted that a workshop on ‘Salon International de Agriculture’ is proposed to be held in 2023 at Paris, France. The Board of AFEID has requested ERWG to find out whether the proposed workshop could be organized and supported with participation of the ICID member countries in Europe. RWG agreed to support this workshop and suggested ICID Central Office to approach AFEID to share the updated information (announcement etc.) of the workshop so that the same can be shared to NCs/members of the group for participation and contribution.

14. The Chair informed members about the UN Water summit on Groundwater in France in 6-8 December 2022 held at UNESCO HQ in Paris, France.

15. Chair requested the members of the group to share relevant information about seminars, sessions, workshops etc. in their country for publicizing the events among the countries in Europe. In this regard, ICID Central Office will request the member countries of the group to share their information on seminars/sessions etc. to Chair of the group.

ERWG Minutes Item 4: Links with regional and trans-national organizations for co-operation

16. The WG discussed the need to strengthen linkages among relevant organizations in each member country and also across the European region. The group reviewed the list (Annex 3, Agenda page 75 & 76) of cooperating organization, reducing the list to organizations with a reasonable expectation of collaboration in the coming years.

ERWG Minutes Item 5: Activities of Focus Groups of ERWG

17. During the meeting, the focus groups activities were discussed briefly, and it was noted that each focus group would share their report after the meeting. WG discussed the activities of ‘Focus Groups’ and decided to have following five Focus groups based on their relevance to Europe: (a) Focus Group on History (WG-HIST) led by VPH Laszlo Hayde (Hungary); (b) Focus Group on Environment (WG-ENV) led by Mrs. Seija Virtanen (Finland); (c) Focus Group on Sustainable Drainage (WG-LDRG) led by Dr. Bernard Vincent (France) & Dr. Irene Bondarik (Russia); (d)
Focus Group on Water Related Risks led by Prof. Klaus Roettcher (Germany) & Mr. Olli-Matti Verta (Finland) and (e) Focus Group on Irrigation and Drainage in the States under Socio-economic Transformation (WG-IDSST) led by VPH Peter Kovalenko (Ukraine). RWG noted that France National Committee is trying to figure out who is replacing Bernard Vincent.

**ERWG Minutes Item 6: Task Force on Legislative Framework on Agricultural Drought Mitigation for European Regional (TF-DMD) – Updates**

18. During the meeting, Vice President Hon. Dr. Marco Arcieri (Italy) updated the members of the group about the results of his studies and research conducted on Drought Prediction. VPH Dr. Marco informed that results of his research activities will be submitted for publication in the Journal ‘Irrigation and & Drainage’ in the revised short form of a scientific paper titled “Drought Prediction in Southern Italy based on ENSO Observation” and the full version of the paper would be produced as an output of ERWG. In this regard, VPH Dr Marco Arcieri presented the main results of the paper currently under review.

**ERWG Minutes Item 7: Proposed workshop of the Working Group**

19. As decided in earlier meeting, RWG decided that the proposed workshop on groundwater management and seawater intrusion to aquifers could be organized as a virtual workshop as a European Regional workshop event. VPH Dr. Marco Arcieri has agreed to take a lead along with VPH Laszlo Hayde for organizing a workshop of the WG and share the announcement with ICID CO for circulation among the members of the group. The timing for the workshop will be determined in the later meetings of the RWG.

**ERWG Minutes Item 8: Dissemination of activities of WG**

**ERWG Minutes Item 8.1: Website of the Group**

20. The WG requested members to share articles, presentations, papers, reports and relevant documents/information based on the mandate of the ERWG for uploading on the WG website. Members were also requested to share the outcome of the seminars/workshops etc. as contribution to VPH Dr. Marco, Chair of the group. The ERWG website has been updated with the membership list, agenda, minutes, paper presentations, publications etc. Members are requested for their active participation in the activities of the WG and facilitate exchange of information, knowledge and experience, as well as networking on the topic in order to keep themselves up-to-date with new developments in the various aspect of drainage. Members are also requested to provide information, papers, presentation made on topics related to scope of work of the WG to the ICID Central Office for uploading on the website of the RWG. In order to ensure regular contribution of the members, WG is encouraged to make full use of Zoom platform for virtual meetings in between face-to-face meeting during IEC.

**ERWG Minutes Item 8.2: Webinar / Web-based Seminar**

21. The potential for webinars to disseminate relevant experience and information about water management in Europe among ICID member countries was discussed in the meeting. It was agreed that the RWG would organize 3 to 4 webinars per year based on the mandate of the RWG. Chair requested the members of the group to participate and contribute their activities in the upcoming webinars of the WG.

**ERWG Minutes Item 9: Any other business**

**Item 9.1: ICID Member’s Profile Section:** The group noted the information on ICID Members’ Profile Section and Chair invited members to visit the Profile Section for updating their information.

**Item 9.2: World Irrigation and Drainage Schemes (WiDS):** RWG encouraged members to share appropriate data in ‘Register on World Irrigation and Drainage Schemes (WiDS). The irrigation projects approved by National Committee/ ICID Central Office for inclusion will be entitled to Certification. Members were also requested to encourage all irrigation project owners, managers, and researchers for contributing to the register. The review process and other details are outlined on the portal <https://wip.icidevents.org/> in detail.