Item 1
Welcome and Opening Remarks by President Prof. Dr. Ragab Ragab
Virtual Meeting Platform

- With millions of people being forced to stay home to help stop the spread of COVID-19, ICID Central Office and Members were in constant touch with the help of reliable and easy-to-use virtual technology (Zoom).
- During the pandemic period, ICID Central Office hosted more virtual meetings, webinars, and online training programs to fill the gap.
- Now online meetings have become an integral part of ICID business, which has shown to be the way to organize Monthly Meetings, Virtual Management Board Meetings, Virtual IEC Meetings, Virtual Workbody Meetings, etc.

Virtual Meetings Organized

- Organized 72nd IEC Meeting 2nd and 3rd Sessions on 15 and 16 December 2021.
- Organized one Special IEC Meeting on 27 March 2023 to discuss the development of the ICID Central Office Building.
- Conducted a total of 29 Monthly Meetings (Hosted on the 1st Monday of every month) and approved the Minutes.
- Conducted 11 Virtual Management Board Meetings (2021 – 4, 2022 – 3, 2023 – 4). In addition, three physical meetings were organized during the IEC.
- Organized 82 Virtual Workbody Meetings (2021 – 27, 2022 – 23, 2023 – 32) and Minutes of the meetings were disseminated.
- In addition, participated and hosted numerous meetings of the partner organizations to strengthen the relations to take forward the mission and vision.
The Covid lockdown has resulted in most people taking to the Internet to communicate, interact, and continue with their job responsibilities from home. An opportunity for e-learning has been created by the pandemic with the availability of efficient online technologies. Webinars have filled in the lacunae of the learning process.

Using this opportunity, ICID Central Office has made attempts to organize informative and knowledge rich webinars to interact with the irrigation and drainage community.

During my period a total 32 webinars were successfully organized and live recordings were made available on the ICID website/ social media channels (2021 – 15, 2022 – 13, 2023 – 4).
Middle East Regional Conference

- In addition to the Asian, African, European, and American Regional Conferences, introduced a new regional conference of the Middle East with support from the Saudi National Committee. The First Middle East Regional Conference is scheduled to be held from 26-28 February 2024 at Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on the theme: "Irrigation Development and Sustainability". [https://sacid2024.sio.gov.sa/](https://sacid2024.sio.gov.sa/)

7 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs)

- Strengthened the partnership and cooperation with partner organizations by signing MoUs:
  - International Association for Agricultural Sustainability (IAAS), January 2023, Dakhla, Morocco
  - International Water Management Institute (IWMI), October 2022, Adelaide, Australia
  - International Commission on Large Dams (ICOLD), June 2022, Marseille, France
  - African-Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO), February 2022, New Delhi, India
  - International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA), September 2021, UAE
  - Arab Water Council (AWC), September 2021, UAE
  - International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), October 2021, Virtual
Restructuring of Workbodies

During our last, 73rd, IEC in Adelaide, it has been decided to restructure the working groups in order to:

a) Avoid overlapping and combine WGs of similar / close mandate.

b) Reduce the number of days allocated for WGs meetings in future IECs and reduce the time and cost of staying at the venue/event.

c) Have a reasonable number of people in each WG (some have a few only) and achieve a reasonable output.

Proposed Themes:
- Irrigation and Drainage
- Natural Resources
- Climate Change & Impact Sustainable Development

New Interactive ICID Website!
Established new ICID website which is creative, interactive and gives better access to web pages and sections; constantly updating the content with helpful information, articles, news, announcements, etc.

Recently introduced features include:

- Introduced new navigation with introduction of new sections
- Dedicated section for Management (Past & Present)
- Launched ICID Young Professionals Directory
- Information of National Committees, Direct Members (Only active members are projected on public domain. Information on associate members can be seen only by ICID members after login)
- Introduced Members Profile section with brief CV, publications, expertise, etc.
- Introduced online membership forms
- Introduced counter using statistics
- Introduced a dedicated section President's Office
- Introduced keyword based searching
- Section on ICID Central Office Staff

Launched for online data security and accuracy of information.
Using this section of the ICID website, members can –
- Upload their photograph
- Add/change Personal Information: Contact details
- Brief Profile (Not more than 300 words)
- Publications (To add a list of publications and their hyperlinks)
- Specialization [To select the areas of specialization(s)]
Introduction Online Application Forms

- Online application form for the ICID membership.
- With the input of required fields, the form automatically collects the irrigated area, drained area, UN contribution as required for calculations.
- An estimate can be downloaded within few clicks to take necessary approvals and final submission.
- With submission a copy of the same will automatically reach ICID email box for follow-up.

ICID CO prepares a proforma invoice with bank details for transfer.
Launched Online Register of Irrigation & Drainage Projects

- Launched on the similar lines of the World Register of Dams being maintained by ICOLD.
- The register will fulfil a much awaited global repository of information in the systematic irrigation and agricultural water management.
- Being implemented as a collaborative effort of the National Committees of ICID and other interested entities dealing with irrigation and drainage.
- Placed introductory video presentation to help professionals with collecting the data.
- Invited all NCs to join the initiative by uploading information about their I&D projects. India and Thailand are presently working on their data in offline mode and will be made live soon.

https://wip.icidevents.org/
Invoicing System

- Introduced a new online secured invoicing system for managing the ICID subscriptions.
- To safeguard subscription money from online threats, introduced different platforms for communication.
- Established a separate email address to communicate with NCs regarding financial matters.
- All invoices are password protected.
- Using alternative communication for informing password (WhatsApp, etc.).

Publications

- Login to your profile page using the ICID website.
- Click on “Dashboard” to see options (1) Edit Profile Page, (2) Members Section.
- Members Section provides information – Your engagements during the 25th ICID Congress & 74th IEC meeting, download publications, Directory full access, MTD DVD version download, Circulars, News, and much more…
**Participation**

- Introduced this section to list all important events agreed/attended by the President Prof. Dr. Ragab Ragab.

- During the period a total 113 meetings were attended, this includes physical and virtual participations (2021 – 32, 2022 – 31, 2023 – 50).

- More than 45 YouTube Video recording.

**Contribution to ICID Knowledge Sharing**

- **Field Scale model**: SALTMED model as a management tool for water, crops, field and N-Fertilizers.

- **Catchment Scale model**: IHMS, Integrated Hydrological Modelling System (Unsaturated zone model, Groundwater model and Seawater Intrusion model combined).

- **Guidelines** on the Use of saline/Brackish Water (FAO-AWC publication).

**Contribution to ICID Knowledge Sharing**


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- **Expected soon**: Guidelines on Non-Conventional water Resources and other contributions to various Working Groups Publications.
The French Translation

- To speed up the publications of Irrigation and Drainage Journal. The ICID CO resourced a local assistance. This helped to ease the backlog of delayed papers.
- Delivering the annual anniversary speeches
- Inviting Ministers of different countries to join ICID
- Increasing the direct and national membership

ICID CO Recognition

- I took over the presidency during the lockdown period – the COVID-19 period. During this period, many organizations underperformed, suffered low productivity, and achieved less than average.
- ICID CO, on the contrary, achieved more than during any other, normal, pre-COVID-19 year. The speed by which the CO set up a communication system (Zoom) and kept the office operating in a “business as usual” way was extraordinary and was only possible thanks to those in the CO who were dedicated and committed to keeping the organization functioning at the highest possible level.
- These members never said “no” to any request for a virtual meeting or a Webinar and kept ICID members in closer contact, even more than during the pre-COVID-19 years.
The service provided, especially the IT part, never failed ICID members which encouraged them to request even more virtual meetings.

We used to meet only in person and mostly only once a year. Over the past 3 years, we met more frequently, reached out to more members, produced more output, and achieved a lot more than during the pre-COVID-19 years.

A few achievements to mention include:

1. Setting up a reliable communication system (Zoom)
2. Conducting over 33 Webinars
3. Conducting over 82 Virtual WGs meetings
4. Designing a new, interactive, ICID website with a counter showing the number of visitors to the site

5. Opening up online applications for memberships
6. Making online Registration of Irrigation & Drainage Schemes
7. Achieving a wider use of Media Platforms to disseminate ICID information
8. Publishing several Digital publications

For those reasons, I believe that as the ICID President, and on behalf of the ICID members, I should officially thank all members of ICID-CO individually by handing each member a personalized certificate that contains an acknowledgment of their excellent service during the COVID-19 period in 2019-2022/2023.

In my view, the ICID-CO did not only keep the ICID ship afloat but managed to safely sail it across the troubled water.
Thank you!