

## **Minutes teleconference on working group on climate change and WASH**

17 April 2009

**Participants:** Carolien van der Voorden (WSSCC), Ase Johannessen (IWA), Sarah Bish (UNICEF), Jane Cacouris (Tear Fund) and Stef Smits (IRC)

**Apologies:** Oliver Cumming (WaterAid), Marloes Bakker (CPWC) and Ton Schouten (IRC) Raimond Hafkenscheid (CPWC), Luuk Diphooorn (NWP) Darren Saywell (IWA)

### Background to the phone conference:

After a welcome and opening by Carolien, Stef gave a short background to the group. This informal group had a first meeting in February. Details of that are in an aide-mémoire. A first brainstorm was held then on whether it would be useful to set up a working group under WSSCC. It was agreed to take a decision on that after Istanbul. This phone conference serves to look at the outcomes and follow-up from Istanbul, and see whether and what next steps would be in establishing such a group.

### Recap from Istanbul and follow-up initiatives

A round was made with key points coming out of Istanbul, and follow-up after that.

Ase:

- Consortium of IWA, WWC, CPWC and IUCN organised topic 1.1 with series of background papers and leading into ministerial roundtable. IWA and CPWC (with initial support from IUCN) coordinated the session 1.1.3 on the topic of Local Actions to climate change, which attracted 300 participants.
- Informal dialogue in the IWA stand with the WASH group present at Istanbul, with discussion of messages coming out of the February meeting
- Recently IWA signed MoU with USAID with one working area to collaborate with Arab Countries Water Utilities Association (ACWUA) amongst others (GTZ, ABRI) to work on climate change issue. Upcoming workshops are being planned in Morocco in May and Lebanon (April) and Egypt (June) with RAED the Arab Network for Environment and Development
- The consortium IWA, WWC, CPWC and IUCN are working with GPPN global public policy network on water management (an initiative by the Stakeholder Forum, and SIWI) that will post messages to the UNFCCC ad hoc working group. IWA will also do so independently with their two position papers on climate change and water and energy respectively.
- Ase's question was whether this working group would want to submit the messages from the discussions in Den Haag and Istanbul also to the ad hoc working group. According to Hannah Stoddart at Stakeholder Forum it would have more impact the more submissions the working group received. Deadline is 24 April. See discussion further below.

Jane:

- Tear Fund disseminated its Separate Streams report during a session.
- Also involved with Stakeholder Forum for UNFCCC.

- Have also applied and have been accepted for a lunch-time seminar in Stockholm World Water Week 2009. See discussion further below.
- Exploring further research on the theme.

Sarah:

- As UNICEF wasn't present at the February meeting, Sarah provided background to UNICEF's interest in this theme. This is mainly coming from the country offices, with discussion of what they could do and how they could be involved. Capacity in UNICEF on climate change is fairly low. At the moment only Sarah is responsible, and she sits in the programme division of WASH. So, need for internal capacity building. UNICEF's work needs to be evidence-based. As UNICEF is not a research organisation, it needs to work with and support other organisations such as this working group.
- Main activity now is working on a strategy for water and environment, large part of which is climate change related. Also reflects principles of community-based natural resources management, behavioural focused and working in partnerships. Has also been working on a literature review.
- UNICEF is also working with the WASH cluster people, because this has such a clear disaster response angle.
- Sarah also sits on the UN Water working group on climate and water. This group is led by WMO and brings together the main UN bodies working on water, and look at bringing more consistency between organisations in climate change responses in the water sector. However, it is still defining its aims and scope.

Carolien:

- Has contacted WHO to find out more about their concrete activities.

Stef:

- Have versioned the perspective paper, and submitted it to Waterlines for publication
- Has had informal talks to various organisations with an interest in this topic, such as ODI and WEDC.

#### Establishing ourselves as a working group

After this round, a discussion emerged on whether and how we should establish ourselves as a working group. Through questions and answers it has been tried to clarify what this entails. Key points emerging from this discussion are:

#### ***Objectives:***

First of all, a discussion emerged on the objectives, as these should indicate what would be the added value and focus of a possible group. It was suggested to take the 3 objectives from the aide-memoire as starting point: 1. Joint advocacy, 2. Developing common understanding through knowledge management, and 3. Provision of information and knowledge services. It is felt that there is added value in acting as a group, particularly in the first two points, as this is where there is more weight as a group. The third objective can come later. Also, we need to clarify whether we focus on WASH only or more broadly on water needs of the poor.

### ***Balance between what individual members and the group as a whole does***

A question arose whether as a group under the WSSCC, we may lose individual visibility and thus motivation to engage fully. It was clarified that this is not the case. Existing groups maintain logos and visibility of the members. Rather, the WSSCC itself is not always so visible. More generally, there is need to clarify what members do, and what is done as a group. There are experiences from other working groups which can guide us.

### ***Process of establishment***

The process of getting established as working group under the WSSCC is very informal, as these are informal communities of practice. The WSSCC only provides some support for the group's activities, e.g. to organise meetings, etc. However, it is recommended that the group writes a short note with its objectives and vision, and how to go about membership. For now, IRC will coordinate the activities of the group.

It was agreed that Stef would send around examples of documents which show how other groups have established themselves and how they govern themselves. He can also make a first draft outline with the objectives and tasks of a climate change group, which then can be shared with the current interested parties.

### **Upcoming activities**

#### ***UNFCCC***

The consortium messages into the UNFCCC are quite overarching, so climate change and WASH messages may get lost. So, there may be a need to submit something specifically on climate change and WASH. The messages from this group would also have a lot of leverage. A discussion followed whether we have our messages sufficiently clearly thought out as a Group. It was concluded that the messages in the power point presentation that Ase gave in Istanbul would form a good and commonly agreed basis. Ase will take these and draft a message based on that. This will be sent around for comments, so as to provide input to the Stakeholder Forum for UNFCCC by 24 April. A suggestion is to make the message positive and pro-active and move away from doom and gloom messages.

#### ***Stockholm***

As mentioned, Tear Fund have obtained a 1 hour lunch session, together with Swedish Water House and this broader working group. People are happy to have such a session indeed on behalf of the group. In terms of content, it is suggested to have it really content-focused, with conceptual inputs based on messages developed in February and a short case study, e.g. by Tear Fund. This session could also be used to pitch the working group. TearFund will talk to other convenors and do a first concept note and send it around to group.

In addition, it was agreed to have a (two-hour, or so) side-meeting with the working group to talk more about the business of the group, such as a work plan and bringing new

members on board. Carolien will explore finding a room for that. It was agreed that we should invite other potentially interested members as well, but on invitation only. Using the proposed two-pager about the group, we can make more groups interested. Potentially interested organisations might include WHO, ODI, WEDC, UN Water and DFID. Also, it would be good to have some of the national coordinators from the WSSCC network on board. The group will be presented during the WSSCC coordinators meeting in May.

**Summary of actions:**

- Stef to draft two-pager with objectives and focus of the group
- Stef to send around governance guidelines of other thematic groups
- Ase to do a draft message for GPPN/Stakeholder forum, send round to the group next week, for all to comment, and then to be sent to Stakeholder Forum by 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Jane to talk to other convenors and to do a first concept note on the Stockholm side-event, to send it round the group.
- Carolien to explore finding a room in Stockholm for a two-hour side-meeting on climate change with the working group members.
- All to contact other potential members of the group, if possible using the two-pager.
- Carolien and Stef to discuss this with the WSSCC NCs during May meeting, and invite some NCs to join the group
- Sarah to send round the ToR of the UN Water climate change group, once developed.
- Jane to share the GPPN documents
- Stef to talk to Marloes and Raymond to update them.