

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE FORMATION OF REGIONAL WATER PARTNERSHIPS**

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*This document should be read in conjunction with the GWP Conditions of Engagement, and the Guidance Notes on Building Partnerships.*

### **1. Introduction**

The Regional Technical Advisory Committees (RTACs) were established in the regions as 'start engines' for the development of a network of regional and country water partnerships. Many of these RTACs are now in the process of transforming into Regional Water Partnerships (RWPs). This transformation involves a shift from working with a small multidisciplinary team of water professionals to a much larger, broad based cross sectoral and multi-stakeholder group of people.

The GWP Water Partnerships are neutral and inclusive platforms for mobilizing and facilitating actions for the implementation of integrated water resources management (IWRM). The constitution and operation of these RWPs is guided by the GWP mission of supporting countries in the sustainable management of their water resources through IWRM, and the principle that they should have transparent processes, and have broad and inclusive representation from the stakeholders in the water and associated sectors.

These guidelines have been developed to facilitate this transformation process and specifically address issues regarding:

- the constitution and responsibilities of the Regional Water Partnership and its regional governance structure
- the nature and remuneration levels of members of the regional governance structure
- the structure of the regional secretariat
- the location and operations of the regional secretariat.

### **2. Transformation of an RTAC to a Regional Water Partnership**

The transformation from a RTAC to a Regional Water Partnership is normally expected to take place within the first four years of an RTAC's operation.

The transformation of an RTAC to a RWP is therefore, an integral part of GWP's strategy for developing its network and implementing its mission. RTACs are encouraged to set targets for transforming into RWPs. For example, GWP Central and Eastern Europe transformed to a RWP when over three quarters of the countries in its region had established a Country Water

Partnership (CWP), and GWP Southeast Asia has set the target for transformation into a RWP when at least four countries in the region have established CWPs.

### **3. Establishing a Regional Water Partnership**

- (i) Each RWP must operate through democratically elected regional governance structures that are established through statutes that are agreed upon by the constituency of the RWP members.
- (ii) The statutes should provide for the establishment of a regional governance structure and specifically spell out important aspects of governance including the following:
  - functions of the different entities of the regional governance structure and their relationships with the members
  - Terms of Office of all the regional governance structure entities
  - linkages of the regional governance structure to the GWP global structures.
- (iii) The regional governance structure should be determined by the region but have:
  - Country Water Partnerships (CWPs) comprised of GWP members in a country. Each CWP should have a Steering Committee and a small secretariat to manage day-to-day operations (more detailed and specific guidelines on CWPs are being prepared). Each CWP should hold an annual general meeting with its members.
  - A RWP with a light and flexible representative body, for example, the ‘Steering Committee’ in GWP Southern Africa, the ‘Council of Country Water Partnerships’ in GWP Central and Eastern Europe, and the Regional Council in GWP South Asia. This body constitutes the highest policy and decision-making body of the RWP.
  - A regional secretariat.

### **4. Constitution of the regional Steering Committee/Council**

- (i) The Steering Committee/Council should comprise of democratically elected representatives from the election constituency – the membership in the region – agreed upon by the region. This may include members from the CWPs, member networks, and so on. In GWP Central and Eastern Europe for example, the Council of Country Water Partnerships (the highest decision making body) is comprised of representatives from each of the CWPs. In GWP Southern Africa and GWP West Africa, the Steering Committee members are elected from the constituency of its regional members. In GWP Mediterranean, on the other hand, the Steering Committee members are elected from the constituency of its regional networks. In GWP South Asia, the Steering Committee comprises of representatives from each CWP – with one man and one woman elected from each CWP to maintain the gender balance.
- (ii) The chair of the regional Steering Committee is democratically elected from the constituency of the elected members to the regional governance structure.
- (iii) The Term of Office of the members of the Steering Committee is normally expected to be a maximum of three years. A phasing out system should be worked out to ensure a smooth transition and continuity of the Steering Committee.

- (iv) The chair's Term of Office shall be determined by the Steering Committee but it is expected to be a maximum of three years.
- (v) The 'chairpersonship' rotates among interested member states of the region and should not be the monopoly of one or just a few member states.
- (vi) After completion of a regional Steering Committee member's term, the member is expected step back and to join the critical mass of individuals who support and strengthen the CWPs.

## **5. Remuneration for the members of the regional Steering Committee**

- (i) Each RWP should set the nature and remuneration levels of members of the regional Steering Committee. In GWP Central and Eastern Europe the Steering Committee receives a small fee to cover two days preparations prior to a Council meeting. In GWP Southern Africa, the Steering Committee receives a small 'Sitting Fee' per meeting. In GWP South Asia and in the GWP Mediterranean, Steering Committee members do not receive a fee.
- (ii) The setting of fees must be done in a transparent manner and should involve tabling proposals for remuneration at a meeting of the regional Steering Committee.
- (iii) The agreed remuneration levels are an integral part of the regional budget – budgets made up of funding from GWP global sources as well as funds from the Regional and Country Water Partnerships raised by their own fund raising initiatives.

## **6. Regional secretariat staff and employment conditions**

- (i) The regional secretariat should be a lean structure comprising:
  - Program Coordinator/Officer
  - Communication Officer
  - Administration Officer.

Efforts should be made to make the regional secretariat reflect a balanced representation from the region.

- (ii) The Regional Coordinators and the Communication Officers should be full time positions. Flexible arrangements can be considered for the Administration Officer provided the secretariat is linked to a 'Host Institution.'
- (iii) Contracts for secretariat staff are expected to be offered for a minimum of two years, renewable, with the approval of the regional Steering Committee.
- (iv) The salaries of the staff of the regional secretariat are set by the regional Steering Committee and should take into account salary levels applying in the country and/or region as appropriate. International remuneration arrangements should be avoided.
- (v) Secretariat salaries are subject to the taxation laws of the country hosting the regional secretariat.
- (vi) Persons who have served as RTAC chairs cannot become the Regional Coordinators. This allows for new expertise in the management of regional affairs.

## **7. The location and mode of operation of the regional secretariat**

- (i) The guiding principle in this respect is to keep a feeling of common ownership among the RWP members. The location of the regional secretariat should thus be seen as a symbol of ownership as much as responsibility.
- (ii) To maintain a shared ownership, the regional secretariat should rotate among its member countries. Countries that have previously hosted the secretariat of the RTACs should give way to other countries keen to host the secretariat. Hosting of secretariat arrangements should not be the monopoly of one country.
- (iii) On the other hand, if there are compelling practical reasons, a region may choose to locate the secretariat in one country of their choice. Where a region opts for this alternative, all members of the regional Steering Committee should agree upon the decision.
- (iv) Ideally, to create a broad based regional governance structure the chair and the secretariat should normally be located in different countries. However, regions can also opt to continue the rotating arrangements currently practiced whereby the secretariat is located in the same country as the chair.
- (v) The regional secretariat is hosted by a reputable organization that has been identified and agreed upon by the GWP Steering Committee, with the concurrence of the GWP Secretariat. International organizations usually present least problems regarding financial matters.

## **8. Administrative Guidelines**

- (i) Upon establishment, the regional secretariat should provide the GWP Secretariat with details of the office administrative arrangements, the contacts and office hours.
- (ii) Under the leadership and guidance of the Regional Coordinator, the regional secretariat should prepare an annual work program, identifying specific targets and outputs and the specific responsibilities of the individual staff members over the work program – spreading over a twelve-month plan period. The specific roles and responsibilities of secretariat staff should be reflected in the work program. The work program should be discussed and agreed upon by the regional Steering Committee in liaison with the respective Network Officer.
- (iii) The regional secretariat coordinates the implementation of the regional work program and budget.
- (iv) The Network Officer is the facilitator/link/liaison person between the region and the GWP Secretariat and network, and should be copied on all correspondence to the network on aspects of the region.
- (v) Travel by the Regional Coordinator should broadly fall within a travel plan approved by the regional Steering Committee. The chair, in consultation with the Network Officer, should approve unforeseen journeys that the Regional Coordinator considers important.