

GEF IW:LEARN

WHAT LIES AHEAD IN 2018!

Dear Colleagues,

Greetings from GEF IW:LEARN, I hope this message finds you well at the start of what is set to be an exciting 2018!

We have been preparing for the year ahead and wanted to take the opportunity to share with you some important updates related to our upcoming activities in 2018-2019 and our services.

EVENTS

WORKSHOPS, MEETINGS AND MORE

We have a number of upcoming events and activities that you should be aware of. Please mark your calendar for these events and be on the lookout for targeted save-the-date announcements in your inbox.

For your reference, please find the full list of IW:LEARN and LME:LEARN events for 2018-2019 [here](#).

9th GEF Biennial International Waters Conference (October/November 2018)

IWC 9 will take place this year and we want to hear from you!

1. What kind of sessions would you like to see?
2. What themes are of great interest to you at the moment?
3. Do you have any other comments or input that would be helpful to us?

Please send us your inputs by **Monday 2 April 2018 in an email with the subject line "IWC9 project input"**

30 April - 2 May 2018: 3rd targeted regional workshop for GEF IW projects in Asia-Pacific

We are heading to Bangkok, Thailand for the 3rd targeted regional workshop for GEF IW projects in Asia-Pacific.

The workshop will include topics such as benefit sharing, water-energy food nexus, climatic change and variability, gender mainstreaming, economic valuation, private sector engagement, transboundary governance, sustainable infrastructure, conjunctive management of surface freshwater/groundwater and others.

Please be on the lookout for the save-the date announcement and invitation.

Travel support to attend other Global Dialogue Events

There are several global dialogue events in 2018 and we have some funding to support your travel to attend.

These include, but are not limited to the:

- 8th World Water Forum, Brazil
- World Water Week, Sweden
- 4th symposium on transnational organised fisheries crime (FishCRIME), Copenhagen



We want to help your project shine in the IW portfolio by featuring your story in our newsletter and by publishing your experience notes on our website.

This year we have set ourselves the ambitious goal of collecting one story and one experience note from every GEF IW project under implementation throughout the course of 2018.

The GEF does request experience notes from the IW projects and we would like to highlight your results and efforts by sharing these with the wider portfolio, so please send them to us as and when they are available.

To have your story featured in our newsletter, please submit the content and pictures (preferably jpeg or png format) by the 20th of the month. Your story will be converted into an Exposure article and then published in the bimonthly newsletter.

Our next Newsletter will be published at the end of February, so please get your stories in by **20 February 2018!** Should you need help in developing your story or have further questions, do not hesitate to contact us.



We work with many GEF International Waters projects to improve online sharing of data and information relevant to managing international waters, including marine, coastal and freshwater ecosystems.

How can we help your project?

Website Toolkit

With the [Website Toolkit](#), IW:LEARN is able to provide your project the support it needs for developing a dynamic content management system. Websites developed using the Toolkit incorporate usability, accessibility and metadata standards, and will be linked through IW:LEARN and UNEP's distributed discovery mechanism. The resulting network will allow access to high quality data and information and ensure dissemination to a broader community of stakeholders.

GeoNode toolkit

[The IW:LEARN Spatial Lab](#) aims to provide a customizable mapping of the GEF International Waters (IW) portfolio and provide a visualization of studies, reports and intervention results on the various transboundary water basins pulled together with the help of the GEF IW projects, partner organizations and authoritative sources and other contributors.

The IW:LEARN Spatial Lab provides a central service for sharing and discovering geodata. The platform lets users upload, manage, and browse and visualize data, and export public data in reusable formats.

This is made possible through GeoNode which is an open source platform for sharing geospatial data and maps.

GeoNode is primarily a social platform, and thus a primary component of any GeoNode instance is the user account. We encourage you to [create your account](#) and begin your visualization experience!

[IWLEARN.NET](#)

Our website is home to all GEF IW projects, past and present. We would really appreciate it if you could please check that the [details for your project](#) are correct and notify us if changes need to be made.

LEARNING EXCHANGE SERVICE CENTRE (LESC)

OUR MARKETPLACE FOR LEARNING

The Learning Exchange Service Centre (LESC) is a mechanism for mobilising the more external network of IW:LEARN Partners to respond to GEF IW Project demands, coordinating Partner-driven learning activities, and providing means for GEF IW Projects to find their way to the various organizations.

Last year, you should have been contacted by Jérôme Koundouno (Jerome.KOUNDOUNO@iucn.org) from the IUCN requesting you to fill out a “Project Needs” template. This is to help facilitate the development of our Learning Exchange Service Centre (LESC).

Using the information you have provided, as well as the opportunities for learning and training by our partners, we will work with GRID-Arendal to create an online “marketplace” where you can search for training or workshop activities in the areas which are beneficial to your project.

We anticipate that the LESOC will be operational on our [website](#) early April 2018.

TWINNING

PAIRING YOU WITH THE RIGHT PROJECT

We are committed to helping you find the correct partners to team up with for vital learning exchanges. This year we have several goals:

- To establish 4 more long-term twinning pairs between freshwater-freshwater or freshwater-marine, focusing on those that interconnect or address common issues;
- To receive 2 ad-hoc twinning exchanges based on proposals received by the IW portfolio;
- To link GEF IW projects with non-GEF projects through our partners such as the International River Foundation, The Nature Conservancy and The International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River.

Twining Portal

We are pleased to announce that our [Twining Portal](#) is operational and I would like to invite you to take advantage of the service to let our community know that you are looking for help.

Very briefly, if you are looking to find a partner to enter into a learning exchange with please fill out the “twining request form”. If you have knowledge to share, please fill out the “knowledge donor form”. More information on the use of the portal, the forms, and an archive of our previous twining exchanges is available directly on the website.

As our database becomes established you will be able to easily search and find the right exchange suited to your specific needs.

Twining on Sex-Disaggregated Water Data

The IW:LEARN gender partnership with the United Nations World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) of UNESCO, seeks to enhance gender equality in water programs through activities that support gender mainstreaming.

To promote gender mainstreaming via Twining Exchanges, IW:LEARN invites your GEF IW project to work with WWAP to broker exchange of experience on mainstreaming approaches.

For more information please consult our [WWAP Gender Mainstreaming Brochure](#) or you may contact Michela Miletto (m.miletto@unesco.org) or Laurens Thuy (l.thuy@unesco.org) directly to develop a twining proposal.

Twining with the International River Foundation (IRF)

Here at IW:LEARN we are working to help leverage the International River Foundation’s existing twining program and their Riverprize Alumni to introduce external experience into our International Waters portfolio of projects.

Potential twining exchange topics offered by IRF include:

- Coordination and collaboration between stakeholder groups, including public private partnerships
- Development of integrated catchment management plans and adaptive frameworks
- Integrated water management including river restoration, rehabilitation and protection initiatives and achieving water, energy and food security
- Achieving balance between sustainable river basin management and economic development
- Building community education and awareness
- Implementation of clean-up projects, greening, and resettlement programs
- Community involvement and participation, including the role of women in river basin management
- Improvement of transboundary partnerships and river basin management
- Enhancement of water governance through policy development and enactment of laws
- Monitoring and evaluation for the sustainable use of water and management of catchments including data analysis, synthesis and report cards
- Utilisation of water markets and ecosystem services in managing river basins
- Building environmental advocacy and campaigning
- Reconciliation of the multiple uses of water to achieve water security

- Alternative livelihood projects (e.g. bamboo propagation)
- Climate resilience and adaptation (infrastructure and community resilience)

Furthermore, the IRF is arranging the International River symposium (IRS) which will be held in Sydney on 14-18 October 2018 and the theme is “Embracing Innovation” for our rivers.

While we will be announcing a clear structure for the twinning with IRF at a later date, if you are interested in any of the above topics and want to enter into an exchange with the IRF, do not hesitate to let me know.



We have a number of services to offer your project, some which you will be familiar with and others which are new.

To help you make the most of what IW:LEARN has to offer, we have developed a brochure which explains all of our services and how your project can become involved. You can find the [online version here](#).

We can set up a skype call to talk about your needs at any time, so please do not hesitate to reach out to Mish or Natalie when you need to. We are here for you!

Natalie Degger, Ph.D.
DEPUTY PROJECT MANAGER AND TRAINING SPECIALIST
GEF IW:LEARN and LME:LEARN

Address: Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of
UNESCO, Marine Policy and Regional Coordination Section,
7 Place de Fontenoy, 75732 Paris, France

Office #: +33145682246
Skype: natalie.degger

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