



An overview of the International Association of Hydrological Sciences and its current activities

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The International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS) is the oldest and foremost international nongovernmental organization that deals with hydrology and water resources. It was established in 1922, incorporating the International Commission of Glaciers, which had been set up in 1894, with the aim of bringing together hydrologists from all countries to promote the hydrological sciences. IAHS is one of the seven associations that form the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG), itself one of the 20 scientific unions that are grouped within the International Council for Science (ICSU). The members of the Association are primarily the representative countries who vote on IAHS policy. There are also individual members.

According to the first article of its statutes, the objectives of the Association are:

- to promote the study of Hydrology as an aspect of the Earth sciences and of water resources;
- to study the hydrological cycle on the Earth and the waters of the continents; the surface and groundwaters, snow and ice, including their physical, chemical and biological processes, their relation to climate and to other physical and geographical factors, as well as the interrelations between them;
- to study erosion and sedimentation and their relation to the hydrological cycle;
- to examine the hydrological aspects of the use and management of water resources and their change under the influence of man's activities;
- to provide a firm scientific basis for the optimal utilization of water resources systems, including the transfer of knowledge on planning, engineering, management and economic aspects of applied hydrology;
- to provide for discussion, comparison, and publication of research results;
- to initiate, facilitate, and coordinate research into, and investigation of, those hydrological problems that require international cooperation.

To fulfil these aims the Association organizes general assemblies, scientific assemblies, symposia and workshops in various parts of the



world, publishes the proceedings of these meetings, publishes a scientific journal, contributes to a wide range of international initiatives and generally fosters activities and collaboration in hydrology and water resources.

The activities of the IAHS are mainly initiated by its Scientific Commissions. There are nine of them:

- International Commission on Surface Water (ICSW)
- International Commission on Groundwater (ICGW)
- International Commission on Continental Erosion (ICCE)
- International Commission on Snow and Ice (ICSI)
- International Commission on Water Quality (ICWQ)
- International Commission on Water Resources Systems (ICWRS)
- International Commission on Remote Sensing (ICRS)
- International Commission on Atmosphere–Soil–Vegetation Relations (ICASVR)
- International Commission on Tracers (ICT).

The IAHS can also appoint working groups for a limited period of time. At the present time three such working groups are operating:

- Hydrology 2020, which consists of 12 young hydrologists in charge of a reflection on the future of hydrology.
- Prediction of Ungauged Basins (PUB) Working Group
- Working Group on Theoretical Hydrology.

The IAHS is also involved in different bodies jointly with other associations and/or organizations

- IAHS/IAPSO Joint Commission on Groundwater–Seawater Interactions
- IAHS/WMO Working Group for GEWEX
- IAHS/IAHR/IAHS Joint Committee on Hydroinformatics.

A Bureau comprised of the IAHS President, the General Secretary, and the presidents of each of the commissions approves and coordinates these activities. Hydrologists from all over the world are encouraged to propose IAHS activities to the Commissions, or directly to the Bureau, and to take an active part in them.

The Association has a large publishing programme. The annual output includes six issues of the *Hydrological Sciences Journal*, between five and ten Red Books (series of Proceedings and Reports), the occasional Blue Books (series of Special Publications), and three issues of the IAHS Newsletter.

The Association, in collaboration with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), makes an annual award, known as the International Hydrology Prize, to hydrologists who have made an outstanding contribution to the science. Since 1983, another annual award marks the contributions of young scientists (under 41 years of age) to the aims of the Association. The award, known as the Tison Award, is made annually on the basis of a paper or papers published in *Hydrological Sciences Journal* or in one of the other publications of the Association.

The IAHS maintains close collaboration with different agencies of the United Nations system, especially with UNESCO, WMO and the International Atomic Energy Agency, through their respective hydrology and water resources programmes, the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) of UNESCO, the Hydrology and Water Resources Programme (HWRP) of WMO and the Joint International Isotope Hydrology Programme (JIHP). IAHS advises these agencies on these programmes, proposes members for project working groups and contributes to the implementation of parts of the programmes.

The last Assembly was in Maastricht, The Netherlands, in July 2001 and the next IAHS General Assembly will be held in Sapporo (Japan), from 7 to 11 July 2003. During this period, the IAHS is led by President Kuni Takeuchi. If you want to know more about the IAHS, you will find the program of all IAHS events in Sapporo, together with all relevant information



about others IAHS activities and publications on the IAHS Web site at the following address:
(including all the abstracts of published papers [http://www.cig.ensmp.fr/iahs.](http://www.cig.ensmp.fr/iahs))