

**DRAFT**  
**Memorandum of Understanding**

**Aim of the Parties**

The 21st century presents unprecedented challenges to the long-term viability of the world's river basins. These critical systems provide freshwater for half the world's people, most agricultural crops, crucial transportation, and the dominant low carbon energy source (hydropower). Yet these vital but often competing uses for water jeopardize a rich diversity of ecosystem services. Managing river basins so that they can continue to provide this full spectrum of benefits is one of the world's greatest challenges.

With increasing competition over limited water resources, governments and others have begun over the last few decades to accept the concept of integrated resource management (IWRM) as a fundamental approach to resource allocation issues, steering away from traditional sectoral approaches. An integrated approach to freshwater management offers the best means of reconciling competing demands. The challenge remains how to address all of the pillars of sustainable development, to create and maintain prosperous social, economic, and ecological systems.

The general objective of the collaboration among the organizations is to facilitate in all regions of the world, the emergence of effective and efficient water governance and of sustainable development of water resources, through the implementation of IWRM at basin level, which allows a better taking into account of all needs, including those of ecosystems.

**Parties**

The following organizations agree to collaborate on advancing integrated river basin management (IRBM) in their own regions and globally:

- **International RiverFoundation**, which works in partnerships around the world to fund and promote the sustainable restoration and management of river basins.
- **International Commission for the Protection of the Danube**, which works to ensure the sustainable and equitable use of waters and freshwater resources in the Danube River Basin.
- **The Global Environment Facility's International Waters Learning Exchange and Research Network (IW:LEARN)** which exists to strengthen global GEF IW portfolio experience sharing and learning, dialogue facilitation, targeted knowledge sharing and replication in order to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of GEF IW projects to deliver tangible results in partnership with other IW initiatives, will support international river basin management by promoting knowledge sharing and capacity building on GEF IW projects addressing transboundary surface water basins.

- **INBO** aims to promote river basin management as an essential tool for sustainable development and for implementing IWRM.
- **The Great Rivers Partnership**, which is a global effort led by **The Nature Conservancy** to create a new model for sustainable management of the world's Great Rivers for people and nature

### **Areas of Collaboration**

This MOU provides a framework for a voluntary, cooperative, committed effort by the organizations to work on circles of activities that build synergies between and among the organizations and help leverage resources to help more river basins globally develop and implement IRBM.

The organizations expect that the collaborative effort outlined in this MOU will enable each organization to add value to their existing work programs, and to engage a wider range of stakeholders in their individual on-going work on IRBM, than would otherwise be possible. MOU signatories view the overall increased public exposure, capacity building and education opportunities arising from joint, cooperative work on advancing IRBM as one of the most important benefits arising from such work and the connection of organizational networks.

All signatories to this MOU agree that other organizations are welcome to join this collaborative effort provided that they are willing to invest their time and resources to advance IRBM collectively.

The following (not an inclusive list) have been preliminarily identified as common activity areas over the next year:

- (1) Knowledge and information sharing via organizational websites;
- (2) Training programs and technical exchanges to build capacity particularly in developing countries;
- (3) Promotion of the International and European River Prize and supporting regionalization of the Prize;
- (4) Conducting events at conferences to keep the dialogue on implementing IRBM advancing (e.g., RiverSymposium, GEF Biennial International Waters Conference, World Water Forum, Stockholm Water Week);
- (5) Development of and broad public sharing of educational materials on implementing IRBM;
- (6) To support each other and help promote each other's activities at river basin and global levels.

### **Principles of Collaboration**

The organizations recognize and accept that each shall be fully responsible for all of their own administrative, operational, and incidental costs arising from participating in the cooperative efforts established under this MOU. Nevertheless, the organizations also commit to, as circumstance and opportunity allow,

undertake cooperative fund-raising efforts aimed at supporting the overall joint efforts established under this MOU.

The organizations acknowledge and agree that each may refer to and communicate fully with third parties about the work being undertaken pursuant to this MOU, provided that such references and communications are always consistent with the terms established under this MOU. In case of doubt about a communication involving the signatories to this MOU, the party planning to make or issue such a communication shall check in advance with the other signatories to confirm that they are comfortable with the proposed communication. In regard to the use of organizational logos, no use of such, or use of any other intellectual property that may be the exclusive property of any of the signatories hereto, may occur without the express written consent of the signatory holding the rights to such intellectual property.

This MOU may be amended in whole or in part, at any time, by the mutual written consent of all the signatories. Should any signatory wish to withdraw from participating in the cooperative work established under this MOU, they shall give thirty (30) days' written notice of the intention to do so, and shall provide in such notice the reason for doing so. No such withdrawal shall affect this MOU as it pertains to the non-withdrawing signatories. Should all of the signatories to this MOU wish to terminate this MOU prior to the expiration date set forth below, they may do so in writing.

This MOU is not intended to and does not create any contractual rights or legally enforceable obligations for the signatories in regard to each other, nor for any third parties working with the signatories on IRBM issues.

This MOU is effective as of the date \_\_\_\_\_, and will remain in effect for one (1) year. Approximately six (6) months prior to its expiration, the signatories shall review all aspects of this MOU and determine if it should be renewed, amended, or allowed to lapse upon reaching the termination date.

**Contact Person**

**ICPDR:**

**IW:LEARN:**

**IRF:**

**INBO:**

**GRP:**

## Signatures

By: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_