

UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation) was founded in 1945 to promote international co-operation between member countries in the fields of education, science, culture and communication.

HELP (Hydrology for the Environment, Life and Policy) is an initiative of the UNESCO's IHP (International Hydrological Programme) and was established to promote new approaches to integrated catchment management. These include the creation of a framework that brings water law and policy experts, water resource managers and water scientists together to work on water-related challenges.

The HELP initiative has established a global network of catchments to improve the links between hydrology and the needs of society. There are currently 91 HELP basins covering 67 countries. More than 600 organizations and hundreds of individuals are involved with the HELP program.

The framework HELP provides within catchments allows scientists, stakeholders, managers, law and policy experts to come together to address locally defined "water related issues". *Water communication* and *public participation* are central to all HELP activities connected with the following policy issues:

- Water, energy and food nexus
- Water and global change
- Water and conflict
- Water quality and human health
- Water and the environment



The International HELP Network

HELP provides a platform for sharing experiences, data and knowledge across an international network of catchments. Being part of the HELP network allows the Burdekin to tap into this resource, as it works towards the implementation of more effective integrated water resources management.

Further information

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UNESCO

http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=29008&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

UNESCO – NATURAL SCIENCES

http://portal.unesco.org/science/en/ev.php-URL_ID=5572&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

UNESCO – INTERNATIONAL HYDROLOGICAL PROGRAM (IHP)

<http://typo38.unesco.org/index.php?id=240>

UNESCO – IHP – HELP

<http://helpforum.ning.com/>

<http://typo38.unesco.org/en/about-ihp/ihp-partners/help00.html>

http://portal.unesco.org/science/en/ev.php-URL_ID=1205&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

HELP was initiated because no comprehensive international hydrologic programme addresses scientific research in a field setting and integrates such research with policy, management and stakeholders' needs at the river basin or catchment scale. HELP is an international initiative designed to integrate hydrologists, managers, policy experts and stakeholders in setting a research agenda; to transfer research information for management and to integrate hydrological knowledge in policy-making.

Water managers & stakeholders

You are aware of the local problems, and hence you have a vital role in formulating the agenda of HELP. Being at the interface between science, law and policy, you can provide a vital link between scientists and society. Managers and Stakeholders can help identify limitations of the current data gathering systems and decide on optimum data sets necessary for rational management of water resources. We need to ensure that we have sound science behind such decisions; therefore, cause-effect linkages must be known and measurable.



Field communication

Water scientists

You need to communicate your research results to water managers and stakeholders based on stakeholder needs/stakeholder driven science. Your science should be delivered through innovative experimental field designs, linking water-related physical and non-physical observations. It should address the effects of scale, which may be different for the physical and non-physical issues. Your main role is to improve understanding of the hydrological processes controlling water quality and quantity, and their relationship to ecology, and how they affect social, economic and legal structures.



Resource monitoring

Policy makers and lawyers

By better appreciating the role of science in water management, you can provide scientists with questions that relate to legal and policy issues. By raising issues of legal entitlement, you can help to ensure peaceful, long-term, equitable access to water for current and future users in a flexible, predictable, sustainable and enforceable policy framework. This will identify the scope of the water resource, schemes for balancing each water sector's interests and ways to verify compliance and allocate use fairly among all stakeholders.



Establishing dialogue

Funding agencies

You can support HELP by recognising and endorsing its objectives and supporting research projects that are locally driven and that address the specific needs of people in water scarce areas of the world.