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UNITED NATIONS
WATER AND SANITATION CENTRE
FOR AFRICA
WATER SUPPLY AND
SANITATION (WAS)

**AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
ON THE ENVIRONMENT
WATER RESOURCES NETWORK**

**Summary Report of the Management and
Planning Group on its Second Meeting**

Cairo, Egypt, 3-6 December 1988

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The second meeting of the Management and Planning Group (MPG) of the Water Resources Network of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) was held at Cairo under the auspices of the Water Resources Centre (WRC) of the Egyptian Government, which also functions as the Regional Co-ordination Unit (RCU) of the Network, from 3 to 6 December 1988. The meeting was sponsored by the Government and by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in its capacity as secretariat of AMCEN.

II. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

A. Opening of the meeting

2. Dr. Abu-Zeid, Chairman of WRC, introduced the two speakers who opened the meeting on behalf of the Government, H.E. Essam Radi, Minister of Public Works and Water Resources, and H.E. Dr. Atef Ebeid, Minister of Cabinet Affairs, Administrative Development and Environment, the current President of AMCEN.

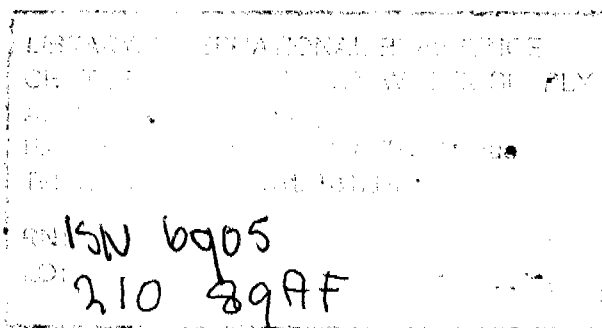
3. Mr. Radi pointed out that the droughts experienced in Egypt and other African countries in recent years demonstrated the importance of developing water resources and the usefulness of the network machinery being established by AMCEN.

4. Dr. Ebeid recalled the objectives and plans for water resources which AMCEN had set. He stressed the need for greater effort to mobilize African financial resources and for the preparation of projects that could gain international support.

5. Dr. Zeid, in welcoming the members of the Group to its second meeting, reviewed the terms of reference of the Network. He underlined the non-financial constraints on development, such as low rainfall, high evaporation and salination.

6. In his statement on behalf of UNEP, Mr. Balek recalled the emphasis placed by AMCEN at its first session on co-operation among African Governments to solve the many environmental problems. Specific problems should be solved at national, subregional and regional levels before considering an integrated multisectoral action. In establishing the Networks, including that for water resources, UNEP was once again fulfilling its catalytic role. However, further efforts were needed to strengthen each Network.

7. Mr. Cappelletti, the representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), pointed out that AMCEN had adopted a broad plan of action which would require long-term programmes and quite substantial resources. Potential sources of finance included: UNDP and International Monetary Fund assistance in country programmes; UNDP assistance through its bureaux for Africa and the Arab States; bilateral aid from non-African Governments; and, of course, individual African Governments. He believed that good progress had been made during the last two years in setting up the Water Resources Network



and recalled the assistance which UNDP had channelled through the Egyptian WRC in that connection. Some 500 projects had been negotiated, of which about 300 were ready for implementation and many of them lay within the scope of AMGEN. There were hopeful signs that the requisite finance would be made available.

B. Attendance

8. Four members of the MPG of the Network, Egypt, Madagascar, Zambia and Zimbabwe, together with 32 representatives of other bodies, participated in the meeting. Full details are given in annex I.

C. Election of officers

9. At the second session, the following officers were elected by acclamation:

Chairman: Dr. M. Abu-Zeid (Egypt)

Vice-Chairman: Mr. M. Moyo (Zimbabwe)

Rapporteur: Mr. L. Mbumwae (Zambia)

D. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

10. At the second session, MPG adopted the provisional agenda and approved the organization of work in the light of the annotated provisional agenda. The latter is reproduced in annex II.

III. DISCUSSION OF OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

Agenda item 4: Progress reports on RCU and UNEP activities

11. The Group had before it the report of the RCU of the Network on its activities since the first MPG meeting was held in October 1987. That report is summarized in annex III. The discussion of the RCU report showed that communications difficulties with Network units and focal points had been a serious constraint. It was expected that matters would improve henceforth.

12. A summary of the progress report prepared by Mr. Balek on UNEP activities related to the Network is given in annex IV. In connection with the agreement drafted by UNEP and WRC on the tasks for RCU to undertake in 1989, UNEP had allocated a budget of US\$30,000. In relation to an extensive planned programme of activities, that sum was recognized as requiring substantial financial resources from Governments; and the UNEP representative appealed for full active support.

Agenda item 5: Reports on action at national and subregional levels and by international agencies

Madagascar

13. The representative of Madagascar, Mrs. Razafy, reported that a national committee for conservation of the environment had been established and would attack the problems of degradation caused by fires and erosion, with the assistance of the United Nations and other international agencies. Six ministries were involved in questions of water management. A large-scale

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project for water supply and sanitation in the southern part of the island, which was dry, had been launched and would be co-ordinated by an inter-ministerial committee, with subcommittees in each province. Soil erosion as the result of floods caused by tropical cyclones was a major problem. In its island isolation, the country needed the benefit of an exchange of views on techniques for dealing the problem. African islands, for the most part small, could be termed a subregion and treated like one: the question of communications made it unrealistic to do so.

Zambia

14. The representative of Zambia, Mr. Mbumwae, reported that there were still organizational problems with regard to the national network, though some progress had been achieved and in November 1988 the Government made changes in the functions of ministries and departments, with a view to improving co-ordination. With the assistance of United Nations agencies and donor countries a number of new projects were due to begin operations early in 1989. Ongoing activities with assistance by the World Bank, the European Economic Community and various bilateral bodies were showing encouraging results.

15. Co-ordination in the use of the resources of the Zambezi River was being achieved through co-operative action, particularly between Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Zambezi River Authority managed the Kariba Dam for hydroelectric power generation and undertook hydrological work in the upper basin of the river. The Zambezi Action Plan, to be implemented within the framework of the Southern African Development and Co-ordination Conference (SADCC), would involve collaboration among all countries through which the river flowed.

16. There was no doubt that the Network generally and institutions involved in Zambezi River affairs in particular would benefit from the long experience of the Egyptian WRC in the management of the Nile River, if some of the WRC staff could be assigned to the newly identified programmes of the networks in other African countries.

17. Training facilities at all levels were organized, not only with international assistance but also by national institutions and organizations.

Zimbabwe

18. The representative of Zimbabwe, Mr. Durham, stated that during the last two years an intensive, co-ordinated, inter-ministerial programme of land-use reclamation had been launched. Mainly gully reclamation was involved and it had been appreciated that proper water resources management must be ensured simultaneously in order to deal effectively with the problems which malpractices in agriculture and mining had caused. There were financial difficulties, however, although the Canadian International Development Agency had made available the full sum which it pledged.

19. Financial constraints had also prevented publication of annual hydrological yearbooks subsequent to 1979 and held back the activities of hydrological stations and gauging weirs.

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Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations

20. The FAO representative, Mr. Sonou, explained that irrigation and drainage were the major areas of activity of his Organization related to water resources in Africa. He instanced the Consultation on Irrigation in Africa in 1986; the publication of the first edition of "Irrigation and Water Resources Potential for Africa" in 1987; the implementation in 1987 - 1988 of a project for training trainers in irrigation water management in West Africa; and the organization of the Interregional Symposium on River and Lake Basin Development at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in October 1988. The Organization had always been an active participant in the Panel of Experts on Environmental Management for Vector Control, whose last meeting took place in September 1988.

21. The efficient transfer of technology for water use in agriculture was the subject of current emphasis. The first edition would be sent to FAO member countries before long of an operational manual for an institutionalized system whereby Governments would effect such transfers.

22. FAO was in the process of establishing a technical co-operation network on wetland development and management, in order to encourage participation in small-scale, environmentally sound projects. In Africa, this translated generally into rice production to relieve population pressure in the uplands.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

23. The representative of UNESCO, Mr. Tuffuor, expressed not only the interest of the Organization in the formation of the AMCEN Water Resources Network but also its continuing hope that a Centre for Water Resources Studies, Research and Development for Africa might be established. The concept of such a Centre, its objectives and functions, was elaborated in December 1983. The Water Resources Network could and should develop and evolve to include the activities then foreseen for a Centre. Taken together, they would form the spearhead of studies and research and would enable water resources to play their proper role in national and continent-wide economic development programmes.

24. He pointed out that the scope for co-operation between the Network and international agencies was considerable:

(a) The Network RCU could assist those agencies to co-ordinate information and data collection, storage and dissemination by individual countries;

(b) UNESCO had library services which supplied textbooks, journals and reference materials free to member countries, thus enabling national libraries to facilitate the studies and research which were basic to progress. Such support had been given to RCU in 1988;

(c) The manner of sharing water resources was crucial to Africa's future. The United Nations played a commendable role in regard to the institutional and legal aspects. UNESCO, through its Scientific Core Programme, facilitated studies and research work on shared basins. RCU and all concerned international bodies needed to collaborate in assessing the potential for economically viable projects for sharing common waters;

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(d) RCU could play an active role in organizing with UNESCO and other agencies certain seminars, workshops and conferences;

(e) By liaison with Governments, universities and non-governmental bodies, RCU might in some circumstances reduce duplication of work;

(f) RCU, in collaboration with international agencies, could develop strategies and implement programmes for obtaining contributions to an Endowment Fund which would assure the functioning on a permanent basis of the Network and the project for a Centre to which he had alluded.

Lake Chad Basin Commission

25. In the absence of a representative of the Lake Chad Basin Commission, the UNEP representative reported that in November 1988 a meeting of experts in Cameroon recommended that the Ministers of the Environment of the member countries of the Commission should approve a diagnostic study being undertaken, which would form the basis for an action plan for the environment of the basin. The study could be ready by March 1990.

Islamic Network on Water Resources Development and Management

26. Dr. Kilani, Executive Director-General of INWARDAM, spoke of the activities of the Islamic Network, with headquarters at Amman, Jordan, which was founded in 1986. He stressed the importance of establishing a linkage with the Water Resources Network of AMCEN and cited the Nubian sandstone aquifer project as an example of common interests.

Agenda item 6 (a): Establishment of a regional co-ordination administrative unit and a library

Agenda item 7: Short-term work plan

27. At the suggestion of the Chairman, agenda items 6(a) and 7 were taken together. The proposal submitted under item 6(a) had been prepared in response to recommendations of MPG at its first meeting. The Chairman added that considerably less finance was available for the administrative unit than anticipated and that WRC was giving such support as its own resources permitted.

28. The meeting had before it costed proposals for the work of RCU in 1989 for a total of \$180,000, made up of:

Staff costs, furniture and equipment	\$30,000
Preparation, printing and distribution of an international directory of water resources organizations and a roster of African experts	\$20,000
Organization of MPG third meeting, technical conferences and workshops	\$35,000
Two training courses	\$40,000
Provision of training facilities and technical assistance to members	\$15,000
Setting up a library	\$40,000

29. The need to strengthen RCU was unanimously agreed and the UNEP contribution of \$30,000 for 1989 was regarded as good seed money for establishing the administrative unit. The need for supplementary contributions from other sources was self-evident.

30. It was desirable to review the content of ongoing training programmes organized or sponsored by agencies of the United Nations system in order to see whether some modifications ought to be suggested in view of the objectives of the Network. RCU should endeavour to acquire publications of those agencies in the field of water resources and related subjects, especially those issued by FAO and UNESCO. RCU should also take advantage of the UNESCO participation programme, in order to obtain equipment and research material for Network activities; it should also endeavour to benefit from UNESCO funds for the provision of hydrogeological maps and of material for the storage and dissemination of information. Likewise, RCU should seek finance from FAO for the preparation of model curricula and syllabi on the environmental aspects of water resources management, to be used in training courses.

31. RCU was recommended to seek an active role in the organization of, and the selection of participants for, ongoing seminars and training courses of United Nations agencies.

32. In connection with the international directory and the roster proposed in paragraph 27 above, RCU was recommended to review relevant UNESCO documentation and report back to the Group.

33. RCU was requested to organize the third meeting of MPG, in consultation with UNEP secretariat and member countries.

Agenda item 6 (b): A Network training programme

34. The meeting had before it a document prepared by Dr. Ayibotele, Director of the Water Resources Research Institute, Accra, Ghana, which proposed a programme of training for the period 1988-1991. It would be implemented by the Network RCU; FAO, UNESCO, the World Health Organization and the World Meteorological Organization as co-operating agencies; and the Governments of Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, the Niger, Senegal, Tunisia and the United Republic of Tanzania. The estimated cost was \$2,510,000.

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35. In the absence of the author, the Chairman explained that the programme had both long- and short-term objectives. It would strengthen two subregional institutions, those at Dar-es-Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania (for anglophone trainees) and in Burkina Faso (for francophone trainees); hold seminars, workshops and courses; prepare model curricula and syllabi for incorporating environmental concerns in water resources and related education and training programmes; and issue publications, as appropriate.

36. The representatives of both FAO and UNESCO observed that some of the proposed courses had already taken place or were due to take place under the auspices of United Nations agencies. The FAO representative added that UNEP had been informed of approval to finance the services of a consultant to prepare the curricula and syllabi envisaged, within a total of \$10,000. The UNESCO representative indicated that the Organization had approved support for library activity, to the extent of \$5,000, and for some participants in ongoing training courses.

Agenda item 8: General discussion

37. Participants were reminded that good opportunities for training were available in Egypt, co-ordinated by WRC.

38. It was stressed that the Network should utilize training projects of UNESCO and other international agencies, in view of limited finance and to avoid duplication.

39. Co-ordination problems gave rise to extensive discussion. An office for SADCC in Zambia or Zimbabwe was considered necessary in connection with the Zambezi Action Plan. Attendance at the annual meetings of the Group by the UNESCO representative could with advantage be supplemented by the participation of members of some National Committees of the International Hydrology Programme as a means of achieving even wider co-operation between the Network RCU and UNESCO.

40. The Network could co-ordinate activities designed to provide international agencies and donor countries with information related to water resources.

41. The procedure for receipt, storage and dissemination of information by RCU to Network members needed consideration. According to availability of funds, a newsletter on the lines of that produced by UNEP might be a suitable medium.

42. The importance of water pricing policy in any programme for conserving water resources was stressed. The technical and socio-economic issues involved evoked a proposal that MPG should set a day for holding a workshop at which the matter would be discussed in detail. Contributions to that discussion by members of the Group would be welcomed. Water pricing was recommended as a topic for discussion at the next meeting of the Group. Furthermore, that might set a precedent whereby at each meeting MPG would identify a subject, technical paper or the like for detailed discussion at its next meeting.

43. Another idea put forward for later consideration was that RCU should organize, in collaboration with UNEP, UNESCO and other United Nations agencies, a biennial workshop on research and studies for the development of African water resources. The aim would be to elaborate an educational programme of specific case studies.

44. The UNEP representative drew attention to a symposium on water pollution to be organized at Nairobi University in October 1989. The UNESCO representative was asked to investigate the possibility of sponsoring participation of five people from African countries with serious pollution problems.

45. It was recommended that the next meeting of the Network RCU should be held in the period November 1989/January 1990 and that its duration should be extended by one day.

Agenda item 9: Adoption of the report

46. The Chairman, reading from an incomplete draft of the proceedings of the meeting, acquainted the members of MPG with the most important comments, recommendations and decisions which it would contain. The Group agreed to adopt that document, when completed, as the basis for a summary report of the meeting. The full proceedings would be available for consultation.

47. Members of MPG would have the opportunity to comment on the summary report if necessary at the next meeting of the Group.

IV. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

48. The closing session was held at the Training and Manpower Facility at Shoulbra.

49. The UNEP representative thanked the Chairman of the Water Research Centre on behalf of all participants for the generous hosting of the meeting, the careful preparatory work and the efficient organization of the sessions.

50. The other participants, in turn, expressed their gratitude to WRC for arranging accommodation, travel matters and sight-seeing.

51. The Chairman declared the meeting closed.

Annex I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Management and Planning Group Members

ABU-ZEID, M
Chairman
Water Research Centre
EGYPT

DURHAM, D.S.
Deputy Director
Ministry of Energy & Water Resources Development
ZIMBABWE

MBUMWAR, L.L.
Deputy Director
Department of Water Affairs
ZAMBIA

RAZAFY, Ch.
Chef de Service
Division de l'Hydrologie
Service de la Météorologie Agricole et de l'Hydrologie
MADAGASCAR

Representatives of International Agencies and Regional Organizations

CAPPELLETTI, L.
Resident Representative
UNDP/Cairo

SONOU, M.
Regional Officer
FAO Regional Office for Africa
GHANA

TUFFUOR, K.
Regional Hydrologist for Africa
UNESCO
SENEGAL

KILANI, A.
Director-General
Islamic Network on Water Resources
Development and Management
JORDAN

Other Participants

MUNEMO, M.D.
Deputy Director
Department of Natural Resources
ZIMBABWE

MOYO, M.
Deputy Secretary
Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism
ZIMBABWE

AMER, M.H.
Director
Drainage Research Institute
EGYPT

EL-KADY, M.
Director
Survey Research Institute
EGYPT

FAHRY, A.
Director
Weed Control and Channel Maintenance Institute
EGYPT

GASSER, M.
Director
Hydraulics Research Institute
EGYPT

HASSAN, I.
Director
Water Resources Development Research Institute
EGYPT

KHAFAGUI, A.
Director
Coastal Protection Research Institute
EGYPT

TAWADRUS, G.
Director
Mechanical and Electrical Research Institute
EGYPT

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ABDEL-DAYEM, S.
Secretary-General
Water Research Centre
EGYPT

RAMADAN, F.M.
Director-General
Department of Planning and Follow-Up
Water Research Centre
EGYPT

Secretariat

UNEP BALEK, J.
Senior Programme Officer
Water and Lithosphere Unit
Environmental Management
Nairobi

Water Research Centre of Egypt

Farouk ABDEL AAL, Senior Agr. Specialist

Ahmed BAYOUMI, Ag. Mech. Eng.

Mary HALIM, Administrative Assistant, Information and
Documentation Centre (IDC)

Mervat ABDEL AAL, Administrative Assistant, IDC

Nermine I. FAHMY, Civil Engineer, Technical Office

Manal HASSAN, Accountant

Mohamed FAHMY, Accountant, IDC

Hisham I. HABIB, Civil Engineer

Agharid SALEH, Documentation Assistant

Amani AMIN, Executive Secretary

Nagwa FAKHRY, Secretary

Mona FARAG, Secretary

Ahmed ZAKI, Public Relations

Waguih GHONEIM, Public Relations

Abdel REHIM, Public Relations

Annex II

ANNOTATED AGENDA

Objective of the meeting

The meeting has been organized to review progress made during the past year in establishing the Regional Co-ordination Unit and to review and approve a proposed short-term programme.

The meeting will also be informed of and discuss the activities of various member countries of the group and of United Nations and regional organizations invited to the meeting.

The meeting will be expected to approve a short-term work plan.

Saturday, 3 December 1988

Morning session
10.00 - 12.00

Agenda item 1

Opening Ceremony

The meeting will be officially opened by representatives of the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt. This will be followed by statements to be delivered by representatives of the United Nations, including the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Afternoon session
14.00 - 17.00 (Break 15.30)

Agenda item 2

Election of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur

Agenda item 3

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

Agenda item 4

Presentation of progress reports by the Director of the Regional Co-ordination Unit, Dr. M. Abu-Zeid, and the UNEP secretariat

Agenda item 5

Reports of members of the Management and Planning Group and representatives of international and regional organizations

Sunday, 4 December 1988

Morning session
09.00 - 12.00 (Break 10.30)

Agenda item 6

Proposals prepared by the Regional Co-ordination Unit and consultants

A. Documents prepared by Dr. M. Abu-Zeid:

- Proposal for the establishment of a regional co-ordination administrative unit of the Water Resources Network;
- Proposal for the establishment of a library for the Regional Co-ordination Unit of the Water Resources Network

B. Document prepared by Dr. N. Ayibotele:

Training Programme of the Water Resources Network

Agenda item 7

Proposals, projects and short-term work plan prepared by Dr. M. Abu-Zeid and the UNEP secretariat

Afternoon session
14.00 - 17.00 (Break 15.30)

Agenda item 8

General discussion

Monday, 5 December 1988

Technical tour

Visit to El-Salhia Land Reclamation Project (as detailed in the technical tour programme)

Tuesday, 6 December 1988

Workshop and agenda items 9 and 10

This meeting will take place at the Conference Room of the Training and Manpower Centre of the Ministry of Public Works and Water Resources, where activities of the Ministry will be presented and requests of the African Network members for training and technical assistance will be discussed.

The discussion will be followed by a break.

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Agenda item 9

Adoption of the report

This meeting will consider a draft report on its proceedings with a view to its adoption.

Agenda item 10

Closing ceremony

The meeting will be addressed by a UNEP representative, one of the members of the Management and Planning Group and the representative of the Egyptian Government.

Annex III

PROGRESS REPORT OF THE REGIONAL CO-ORDINATION UNIT
OF THE AMCEN WATER RESOURCES NETWORK FOR 1988

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report summarizes the main achievements of the Regional Co-ordination Unit (RCU) of the Water Resources Network established by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) since the convening of the first meeting of the Management and Planning Group (MPG) of the Network in October 1987.
2. That first meeting was followed by a sad event: the decease of Dr. L. David, Senior Programme Officer in the UNEP secretariat, who used to follow up the activities of the Network and co-ordinate the work of the Programme with all African member countries in that connection.
3. The gap created by the death of Dr. David and the non-authorization of a budget for RCU, financed either by UNEP or by the member countries, rendered the execution of RCU commitments rather difficult, especially at a time when RCU was working towards the establishment of an administrative unit and a library. RCU, represented by the Water Research Centre of Egypt (WRC), was therefore obliged to perform its various tasks with very limited resources.

II. ACTIVITIES IN 1988

4. The major RCU accomplishments during 1988 should be viewed in the light of the above remarks. The Unit prepared a report on the operational and organizational arrangements for the Water Resources Network, including proposed estimates for network activities for two years ahead. The report was submitted to the first meeting of the River and Lake Basins Committee held at Harare, Zimbabwe, 25-27 March 1987. It was later submitted to the Bureau of AMCEN, which approved it.
5. The Unit began constituting its main structure and staff. An entire floor in the new WRC building has been set aside for the headquarters of the Unit and a small budget was authorized to permit a limited number of secretariat staff to be recruited.
6. WRC is in the process of developing and automating its scientific library, not neglecting to include a special section for reference works and textbooks on water resources in Africa. WRC will be glad to receive any relevant new publications, periodicals or circulars from member countries.
7. RCU participated in the meetings of the Undugo Group countries held in Egypt in November 1988. The Unit also participated in the meeting on the Intergovernmental programme for technical co-operation among African developing countries held in Egypt, 9-13 July 1988. It prepared reports on the training facilities and the technical expertise that could be offered by the Egyptian water resources authorities to other African countries. Those

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facilities had been discussed at the above-mentioned meeting, where the requirements of the anglophone countries were identified as a first stage. The reports are at the disposal of the Management and Planning Group for reference.

8. In co-operation with the Egyptian National Committee of the International Hydrology Programme and UNESCO, RCU participated in organizing the international post-graduate training course on Environmental Hydrology for Arid and Semi-Arid Regions. The course was held at Cairo in May - June 1988. The five participants from African countries were sponsored by the Egyptian Government and UNESCO.

9. The Unit participated in organizing an international training course on "Environmentally Sound Management of Water Resources", held at Cairo, 20 November - 1 December 1988. The following African member countries participated in the course: Egypt, the Gambia, Ghana and Nigeria. Other participants came from Brazil and Jordan. The members of the Management and Planning Group would have taken part in some of the activities of the course, but for the change of date of its own meeting.

10. RCU began to organize, in co-operation with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Water Research Centre of the Egyptian Government, a training course on "Water Resources Development for Agricultural Use", due to be held in February - March 1989 with the participation of representatives from the following African countries: Angola, Botswana, Kenya, Mozambique, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

11. RCU received an offer from UNESCO in November 1988 to share in developing and automating the WRC library, for which a grant of US\$ 5,000 would be made. The offer is under consideration by UNEP and the Unit.

Annex IV

UNEP ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE WATER RESOURCES NETWORK

Summary of the Progress Report Submitted to
the Meeting by Mr. J. Balek

1. The establishment of an inter-institutional scheme for the African region has to overcome many problems. It is instructive to give some practical examples drawn from UNEP activities, rather than dwelling on abstract generalities.
2. Two projects were concerned with environmental management of inland water - the Zambezi River Basin and the Lake Chad Basin. Governments are to be assisted in various technical aspects of such management and in informing the public of what is being done. The exchange of information through an efficient network is clearly necessary to improve action at the international level and to promote development at the national level. A group of experts from donor countries which visited the Zambezi basin area reported that individual organizations were willing to go ahead but a lack of co-ordinated action was observable.
3. Drought in the Sahel has caused drastic, alarming changes in environmental conditions around Lake Chad. A multi-disciplinary study is urgently needed, and has been approved, of the physical and ecological environment. All climatic and socio-economic aspects need to be identified at national and basin level. Once again, regional information exchange must be stepped up and a subregional water resources network is indispensable.
4. Nevertheless, some lessons may be learned: one must know thoroughly what the present situation is and then make the experience gained fully utilizable in strategies for the short, medium and long term.
5. With the aim of promoting network activities, UNEP and WRC, in its capacity as RCU, drafted an agreement recently in which the immediate tasks for 1989 were clarified. As envisaged by AMCEN, RCU will be concerned with:
 - (a) Maintenance of links with other structures of AMCEN to ensure that the Network plays its supporting role in connection with the work of committees and in the formulation of pilot projects, through the provision of technical and scientific assistance;
 - (b) Maintaining constant contact with the various member institutions of the Network and their national focal institutions;
 - (c) Promotion of information exchange among member institutions of the Network and collection of information/experience and its dissemination. Information may be of a technical nature or relate to the experience of the member institutions regarding past projects, current activities and planning of future programmes. RCU will require an inventory of water-environment

entities in Africa, and will need to develop a database, acting as the regional centre for information on water resources in Africa. RCU may itself generate information of a technical and scientific nature, but its first task will be to collect, process, store and make available such information;

(d) Development of priority activities of the Network regarding water resources needs, training programmes, projects in the region etc., once the Network is fully operational;

(e) Co-operating closely with the secretariat of AMCEN regarding all activities and plans of the Network; and co-ordinating its activities with those of its Management and Planning Group (MPG).

6. WRC will assume overall responsibility for the co-ordination of the following activities:

(a) Provision of office space for RCU;

(b) Seeking funds from the Egyptian authorities for the installation and running costs of the telecommunications lines; and, in its capacity as RCU:

(c) Recruiting an officer, having consulted UNEP and the AMCEN secretariat, to assist the Director of RCU in running the day-to-day activities of the Network;

(d) Production of an up-to-date inventory of institutions and individuals in the area of water resources environment in Africa and continuous updating thereof;

(e) Selection of the host country for meetings of MPG and drawing up with that country a host country agreement and details of the meeting, including its venue. It will seek the advice of UNEP in making those arrangements and ensure that the proposed arrangements are communicated to UNEP;

(f) Preparation of a detailed workplan with timetable and budget for the activities of the Network, to be discussed with and approved by MPG;

(g) Preparation of a background paper and presentation to MPG on the development of a conceptual framework for the sustainable development of water resources in Africa. As agreed at its first meeting, MPG will appoint a working group to develop a framework for the short-term objectives of the Network. The paper will form the basis for the terms of reference of the working group, which are to be approved by MPG;

(h) Development of formal proposals as to how the Network will gather, process and disseminate information on the experience of water resources projects in Africa. Those proposals are to include a workplan and budget.

(i) Organization of the channels for distributing the information collected. Initially, it is proposed to utilize the UNEP Newsletter. By mid-1989, however, the Network should issue its own newsletter.

7. The training component of the Water Resources Network programme has been given high priority. Before WRC became fully operative as RCU, UNEP organized on behalf of AMCEN two training courses on environmentally sound management of water resources: one for francophone and one for anglophone countries. The former was held at Niamey, Niger, in September 1988. The latter was held at Cairo, Egypt, in November 1988, in co-operation with WRC. Both courses were convened by the International Training Centre for Water Resources Management. Forty trainees from Africa participated. Since the Network was not yet fully operational, UNEP was once again responsible for the selection of participants and regional representation was fully respected. Self-evaluation of the courses by the participants will be available in June 1989 and results will be distributed through the Network as a part of the initial activities of RCU. The detailed programme and agenda will be made available in similar fashion.