

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

Thirteenth WMO Congress, Geneva, May 1999

RESOLUTION 25 (Cg-XIII)

EXCHANGE OF HYDROLOGICAL DATA AND PRODUCTS

THE CONGRESS, NOTING:

1. Resolution 40 (Cg-XII) – WMO policy and practice for the exchange of meteorological and related data and products including guidelines on relationships in commercial meteorological activities,
2. The inclusion of dedicated observations of the climate system, including hydrological phenomena, as one of the four main thrusts of The Climate Agenda, which was endorsed by Twelfth Congress,
3. That Technical Regulation [D.1.1] 8.3.1(k), states that, in general, the routine functions of NHSs should include, *inter alia*, "making the data accessible to users, when, where and in the form they require" and that the Technical Regulations also contain a consolidated list of data and product requirements to support all WMO Programmes,
4. That the nineteenth Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly agreed, in its overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21, that there is an urgent need to "...foster regional and international cooperation for information dissemination and exchange through cooperative approaches among United Nations institutions, ..." (A/RES/S-19/2, paragraph 34(f)),
5. That the fifty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly adopted, by resolution 51/229, the Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses, Article 9 of which provides for "regular exchange of data and information",
6. That the Intergovernmental Council of the International Hydrological Programme of UNESCO adopted at its twelfth session Resolution XII-4 which dealt with the exchange of hydrological data and information needed for research at the regional and international levels,

CONSIDERING:

1. The significance attached by International Conference on Water and the Environment (ICWE) (Dublin, 1992) to extending the knowledge base on water and enhancing the capacity of water sector specialists to implement all aspects of integrated water resources management,
2. The call of world leaders at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)(Rio de Janeiro, 1992) for a significant strengthening of, and capacity building in, water resources assessment, for increasing global commitment to exchange scientific data and analyses and for promoting access to strengthened systematic observations,
3. That the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) in its Decision 6/1 "Strategic Approaches to Freshwater Management" has strongly encouraged States to promote the exchange and dissemination of water-related data and information, and has recognized "the need for periodic assessments ... for a global picture of the state of freshwater resources and potential problems",
4. The call by the nineteenth Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly "for the highest priority to be given to the serious freshwater problems facing many regions, especially in the developing world" and the "urgent need ... to strengthen the capability of Governments and international institutions to collect and manage information ... and environmental data, in order to facilitate the integrated assessment and management of water resources",
5. The requirements for full, open and prompt exchange of hydrological data and products in support of various international conventions, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Convention on Combat Desertification,
6. The requirement for the global exchange of hydrological information in support of scientific investigations of world importance such as those on global change and the global hydrological cycle, and as a contribution to relevant programmes and projects of WMO, other United Nations agencies, ICSU and other organizations of equivalent status,
7. The opportunities for more efficient management of water resources and the need for cooperation in mitigating water-related hazards in transboundary river basins and their water bodies which depend on the international exchange of hydrological data and information,

8. The increasing recognition through scientific and technical endeavours, such as GEWEX, of the importance of hydrological data and products in improving the understanding of meteorological processes and subsequently the accuracy of meteorological products,

RECOGNIZING:

1. The responsibility of Members and their NHSs to provide for the security and well-being of the people of their countries, through mitigation of water-related hazards and sustainable management of water resources,
2. The potential benefits of enhanced exchange of hydrological data and information within shared river basins and aquifers, based on agreements between the Members concerned,
3. The continuing need for strengthening the capabilities of NHSs, particularly in developing countries,
4. The right of Governments to choose the manner by which, and the extent to which, they make hydrological data and products available domestically and internationally,
5. The right of Governments also to choose the extent to which they make available internationally data which are vital to national defense and security. Nevertheless, Members shall cooperate in good faith with other Members with a view to providing as much data as possible under the circumstances,
6. The requirement by some Members that their NHSs earn revenue from users, and/or adopt commercial practices in managing their businesses,
7. The long-established provision of some hydrological products and services on a commercial basis and in a competitive environment, and the impacts, both positive and negative, associated with such arrangements,

ADOPTS a stand of committing to broadening and enhancing, whenever possible, the [free and unrestricted](#) international [exchange](#) of hydrological data and products, in consonance with the requirements for WMO's scientific and technical programmes;

FURTHER ADOPTS the following practice on the international exchange of hydrological information:

1. Members shall provide on a free and unrestricted basis those hydrological data and products which are necessary for the provision of services in support of the protection of life and property and for the well-being of all peoples;
2. Members should also provide additional hydrological data and products, where available, which are required to sustain programmes and projects of WMO, other United Nations agencies, ICSU and other organizations of equivalent status, related to operational hydrology and water resources research at the global, regional and national levels and, furthermore, to assist other Members in the provision of hydrological services in their countries;
3. Members should provide to the research and education communities, for their non-commercial activities, free and unrestricted access to all hydrological data and products exchanged under the auspices of WMO;
4. Respecting (2) and (3) above, Members may place conditions on the [re-export](#), for commercial purposes, of these hydrological data and products, outside the receiving country or group of countries forming a single economic group;
5. Members should make known to all Members, through the WMO Secretariat, those hydrological data and products which have such conditions as in (4) above;
6. Members should make their best efforts to ensure that the conditions placed by the originator on the additional hydrological data and products are made known to initial and subsequent recipients;
7. Members shall ensure that the exchange of hydrological data and products under this resolution is consistent with the application of Resolution 40 (Cg-XII) – WMO policy and practice for the exchange of meteorological and related data and products including guidelines on relationships in commercial meteorological activities;

URGES Members, in respect of the operational and scientific use of hydrological data and products, to:

1. Make their best efforts to implement the practice on the international exchange of hydrological data and products, as described in FURTHER ADOPTS (1) to (7);
2. Assist other Members, to the extent possible, and as agreed upon, in developing their capacity to implement the practice described in FURTHER ADOPTS (1) to (7);

REQUESTS the Executive Council to:

1. Invite the Commission for Hydrology to provide advice and assistance on technical aspects of the implementation of the practice on the international exchange of hydrological data and products;
2. Keep the implementation of this resolution under review and report to Fourteenth Congress;

DECIDES to review the implementation of this resolution at Fourteenth Congress.

"Free and unrestricted" means non-discriminatory and without charge. "Without charge", in the context of this resolution means at no more than the cost of reproduction and delivery, without charge for the data and the product themselves.

"Exchange", in the context of this resolution, means the movement of data and product between countries or, as it is more likely in the case in the field of hydrology, the movement of data and product from one country to another.

"Re-export", in the context of this resolution, means to redistribute, physically or electronically, outside the receiving country, group of countries forming a single economic group, or regional and global data centres, directly or through a third party