

White Water to Blue Water Committee Focal Areas

Thematic SubCommittees:

Integrated Watershed Management

Water runs downhill resulting in land-based activities being responsible for 80 per cent of the pollution of the oceans and numerous health impacts. As a consequence, the proper management of our watersheds is essential for the protection of the marine environment and health of the region's people. The Integrated Watershed Management theme will address activities impacting the watershed such as agriculture, forestry, land use and planning, tourism, and wastewater treatment.

More specifically, the theme will discuss how to protect water supplies by addressing appropriate technologies, water conservation, and land use policy. Integrating tourism development will also be key. How can we transfer benefits, mitigate land degradation, help enforcement and compliance, and collect data on tourism impacts?

Marine Ecosystem-based Management

The Marine Ecosystem Theme will include presentations and discussions within the structure of the Large Marine Ecosystem approach to ensuring the long-term productivity and sustainability of the living resources and the environment. This concept is predicated on the fact that marine pollution and living marine resources respect no political and few geographical boundaries. Management requires a large scale, concerted and holistic approach for assessment and control actions, that can accommodate scaling up from small local embayments and estuarine problem areas to national and international ecosystem-wide sustainability problems areas. Breakout groups will be organized around the following modules: Productivity; Fish and Fisheries (includes conservation of biodiversity); Ecosystem Health and Pollution; Socioeconomic Factors; and Governance (includes adaptive management and stakeholder participation).

Sustainable Tourism

The Sustainable Tourism Subcommittee will address priority sustainable development issues in the tourism sector. Specific areas that may be identified may include master planning, community tourism, destination management, guidelines for tour operations, the environmental management of hotels, the education of tourists, and standards and certifications. Throughout, the Subcommittee will remain focused on integrating approaches across sectors in order to fully address issues and involve all relevant partners. The Subcommittee will identify relevant partners from international organizations, NGOs, academia, governments, and the private sector who will collaborate on solutions, contribute to projects and programs, engage in training and capacity building, or take other actions to further sustainable tourism.

Environmentally Sound Marine Transportation

The issue of Environmentally Sound Marine Transportation is an integral part of the White Water to Blue Water Initiative (WW2BW), because the impacts from boats and ships range from the coastal and nearshore environments to blue water. These impacts can be divided into two general categories: operational impacts (e.g., the discharge of wastes, anchor damage, damage caused by wake or propulsion, noise) and accidental impacts (e.g., groundings, collisions). The Environmentally Sound Marine Transportation segment of WW2BW will promote partnerships to address these impacts. Partnerships provide a practical and effective mechanism to involve private industry, governments, non-governmental organizations, academia, funding institutions, international institutions, and others in supporting environmentally sound marine transportation in the Region. While the focus of this segment is to address adverse environmental impacts, it also recognizes that vessels of all types and sizes yield important benefits to the Region including through the generation of tourism and providing the means for the import and export of goods. Thus linkages and partnerships, taking into account all interests, will be encouraged and facilitated before, during, and after the Miami Conference.

Cross-cutting Subcommittees:

Education, Training and Capacity Building Group

Education and training are fundamental to enhancing integrated approaches across the main sectoral areas of the conference. The group's main purpose is two-fold: to identify education-related needs and fill gaps in the conference program; and to develop and execute a training "institute" during the conference.

Replicating the successful model at the WSSD, an Institute for Sustainable Development will be run during the Conference. The ISD will provide short, "how-to" courses on subjects related to WW2BW, Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Action. The Institute is designed to provide new skills or knowledge to enhance sustainable development at both the scientific and managerial level. Courses should be practical "how-to" types of courses, with real and immediate value to practitioners of sustainability. For example, proposed courses may include: how to formulate partnerships; securing financing, grant writing, project management and technical areas such as integrated coastal zone management.

It is expected that most courses will already have been given elsewhere, with materials that can be handed out. Courses can be ½, 1, 2 or 3 days long. Ideally, materials will be put on the world wide web to make widely them available after WW2BW.

Climate Change Adaptation and Hazard Mitigation

The objective of this subgroup is to ensure that the issues of climate change and natural hazard mitigation are fully incorporated in the main themes of the conference. For this purpose, the subgroup will develop a brief description of the potential impact of climate change and climate

extremes on the four themes, and of the likely manifestations of the impact. Adaptation options will be identified, as well as likely synergies between adaptation to climate change and mitigation of present-day climate extremes. The sub-group is prepared to assist the co-chairs of the main themes with suggestions for the inclusion of this cross-cutting theme, and possible speakers and partnerships to address relevant cross-cutting issues.

Marine Science Advisory Group

The Marine Science Advisory Group is tasked with ensuring that this important crosscutting theme is represented in discussions and partnerships related to the major themes of the initiative, which are integrated watershed management; marine ecosystem-based management; sustainable tourism; and environmentally sound maritime transportation. Some of the issue areas that the Marine Science Advisory Group will be examining include fisheries, coral reefs, research education and training, and observing systems. The advisory group will work closely with the thematic subgroups to develop the appropriate connections between the components of the conference and the partnerships that will result from the initiative.

Partnership and Outreach Subcommittees:

Partnership Identification and Guidance

The role of the Partnerships Sub-Committee is to identify opportunities for partners and partnership, and to seek out methods and mechanisms to facilitate the establishment of partnerships throughout the WW2BW program, and to bring in partners. As such, the group is participating in the entire steering committee process, and providing advice and assistance as necessary. In particular, the group will focus on the organization and support-mechanisms for the Miami Conference with an eye toward facilitating partnerships.

Private Sector Outreach

The Private Sector Outreach Subcommittee will facilitate the identification and engagement of private sector partners (chambers of commerce, associations, trade organizations, companies) in order to further the objectives of WW2BW. The Subcommittee will use several broad-based outreach methods such as USG list-serves and websites and the capabilities of the various chambers of commerce, associations, and trade organizations, to reach potential private sector partners. Once relevant partners are found, the Subcommittee will assist them in finding and joining relevant projects, and will help connect them to the Co-chairs of the relevant thematic and cross-cutting subcommittees of WW2BW. The Subcommittee will invite private sector partners to 1) contribute either in-kind or monetary resources to projects and programs, 2) collaborate in voluntary stakeholder fora to find solutions to problems, 3) provide or receive education, outreach, training, or capacity-building for the purpose of being responsible environmental stewards, 4) sell technology, products, or services that further the objectives of WW2BW, and 5) provide needed linkages.

Donor and Foundation Outreach

The Donor and Foundation Outreach Subcommittee will facilitate the identification and engagement in the White Water to Blue Water initiative of donors, including foundations, working in the Wider Caribbean Region on coastal and watershed issues. The primary goal in engaging these actors is to maximize cooperation among and to reduce duplication within the work of different donors in the region. The Subcommittee will undertake an inventory of relevant, current and planned activities in the region. Using this information, the Subcommittee will assist donors in establishing partnerships, where combining efforts would enhance the projects or programs of each. Similarly, the Subcommittee will assist donors in identifying areas where work could be refocused to avoid duplication of effort.