

Extrait du OIEau - IOWater - OIAgua

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Central America: Integrated management of shared river basins 1998 - 2000

- International Office for Water - Cooperation - International actions - Integrated water resources management (IWRM) -

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The PACADIRH (Action Plan for the Integrated Management of Water Resources in the Central American Isthmus) was approved in 1999 by the Authorities of the various Central American countries. The different regional structures, such as the CCAD (Central American Commission for Development and the Environment) part of the SICA (Central American Integration System), in partnership with CAPRE and CRRH (Regional Committee for Water Resources) are responsible for promoting projects for the implementation of the PACADIRH.

The meeting of basin organisations from Central America and the Caribbean, which took place in Costa Rica (May 1997) and in Guatemala (July 1998), strengthened relations between the International Office for Water and its partners in the 6 Spanish speaking countries concerned (Costa Rica, Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama).

Therefore, many missions took place from 1998 to 2000 to promote integrated, participatory and sound water resource management in the Central American Isthmus.

Priority topics of the project:

- **Improvement in the knowledge** of water resources, various uses and withdrawals, discharges and pollution sources, water quality and associated aquatic ecosystems.
(Integrated geographic information systems, computerised exchange formats - establishment of national and basin information systems).
- **Formulation of the appropriate institutional frameworks** (legislative reforms, definition of responsibilities, creation of basin organisations, participation of users in Basin Committees, training of executives from the Civil Service and representatives of users and Local Authorities...)
- **Planning and Action Programmes**, integrating the concept of participatory management, the formulation of investment plans aiming to achieve sustainable development and therefore integrating environmental issues, establishment of instruments necessary for administrative and technical follow-up.
- **Adaptation of financial systems** (application of the "user-polluter-pays" principle, feasibility studies and establishment of water charge systems to finance collective investments in the basin...)

Action plan:

The French regional co-operation delegation supports the implementation of this ambitious project for which complementary actions are needed:

- **specific training courses on administrative know-how** relative to the four priority topics;
- **specialised international expertise**, from IOWater experts in particular, as well as from the French Administration and the six Water Agencies.

Life-size field experiments are planned in the Paz River Basin, shared by Guatemala and Salvador. Therefore it will be possible to deal with the issue of transboundary rivers, a fundamental one in this region since 57% of water resources are shared.

Financial support has been requested to the French Fund for Global Environment to complete this project.