

**17th RiverSymposium, September 15-18 2014. Canberra, Australia. Theme: large river basins.
Special session on water security by the Global Network to Advance IRBM and partners**

**Title: Water security in large river basins
15 September 2014, 1100-1240**

Convenors: The Nature Conservancy (TNC); International RiverFoundation (IRF); International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO), US Water Partnership (USWP), Global Water Partnership (GWP) and World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

Session outline

Water security is considered in general terms as the availability of an acceptable quantity and quality of water for health, livelihoods, ecosystems and production, coupled with an acceptable level of water-related risks to people, environments and economies. Large river basins, many of which are highly diverse, complex and transboundary in character, are typically the engines of domestic and regional socio-economic development. They also harbour some of the world's most valuable natural capital and aquatic biodiversity. Today, such basins illustrate the full spectrum of existing and emerging issues associated with water security, from fundamental water scarcity, to human security and future conflict prevention. Novel partnership models are being sought to sufficiently address the complex water security challenges such environments pose globally.

The objectives of this session are to use on-the-ground studies from large river basins in different biophysical and socioeconomic development contexts to:

1. Open a dialogue on the various dimensions of water security of particular importance in large river basins.
2. Highlight water security science or policy areas which require immediate and targeted attention.
3. Identify any new or emerging concerns, and the partnerships to help address them.

Session format

The chair will open the session and welcome participants. He will provide an overview of the different dimensions of water security characteristic of large river basins and recap on key points emerging from the plenary presentation on water scarcity ("Rivers Running Dry: Seeking sustainability in a world of change").

This will be followed by 4 case studies, for which the chair will briefly introduce the speakers, a roundtable discussion, and closing reflections from a 3-person panel.

11h00-11h10: Welcome and session overview

Session chair: Mr Brian Richter, TNC.

11h10-11h50: Short presentation series

The topics will be raised in 4 short presentations (10 minutes each inclusive of Q&A; PowerPoints) that get participants on same page and promote active debate by all participants. Briefs can be handed out on the day to cover additional content for the cases presented.

11h10-11h20. Case 1: *Water security and conflict prevention in the Niger Basin.*

Presenter: Dr Rebecca Tharme, TNC. With Dr John Kelly, National Defense University, USA; Mr Gregory Copley, International Strategic Studies Association; Dr David Michel, Stimson Center; Mr Chuck Chaitovitz, Global Environment & Technology Foundation and USWP; The Association of the United States Army; Dr Adeel Zafar, United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health; and the United States Institute of Peace.

Email: rtharme@tnc.org

11h20-11h30. Case 2: *The role of river basin organizations in water security around the world: best experiences.* Presenter: Mr Jean-François Donzier, INBO.

Email: jf.donzier@oieau.fr

11h30-11h40. Case 3. *Environmental water and water markets in the Murray-Darling Basin.*

Presenter: Mr David Papps.

Email: David.Papps@environment.gov.au

11h40-11h50. Case 4: *Water Security in the Hindu Kush Himalayan Region.*

Presenter: Dr David Molden, ICIMOD. With Dr Shahriar Wahid, ICIMOD.

Email: David.Molden@icimod.org

11h50-1220: Plenary roundtable discussion

Approx. 30 mins, 2 questions posed by chair at start, plenary roundtables.

Facilitator: Bounthavivanh (Vahn) Mixap (GWP-IRF)

Dialogue of all participants, focused on either or both of the following questions:

1. In large river basins, which dimensions of water security are important to consider and why?
2. Which current or emerging water security concerns need immediate attention, and which partnerships might help address them?

12h20-12h40: Panel closing reflections

Moderator and closing remarks: Ms Melanie Ryan, IRF.

The session ends with reflections on other topics and consolidation of session outcomes by a panel.

Panelists (3 minutes per panelist):

1. Water security, consumption, and the tourism nexus. **Ms Bounthavivanh Mixap, GWP- IRF Ken Thiess Memorial Scholarship holder.**
2. Environmental flows in water security: ecosystem services of the River Ganga. **Prof. Jay O’Keeffe. Environmental Learning Research Centre, Rhodes University, South Africa.**
3. Water Stewardship. **Mr Oliver Maennicke, WWF Australia.**

Thanks and session closure.