

Transboundary Aquifers Commission short activities report for 2024

CONTENT

By TBA-C chair and co-chairs:

Alfonso Rivera, Rosario Sanchez, Arnaud Sterckx, and Kevin Pietersen

1. INTRODUCTION
2. ACTIVITIES
3. SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This report covers the last year of the TBA Commission first mandate. The main activities are described including restructuring of its new website, production of substantial Newsletters; scientific, social, policy and legal advice to international UN Agencies and institutions; providing education; and participation to numerous symposia, conferences, congresses and workshops around the world. The Commission has increased the generation and exchange of knowledge regarding transboundary aquifers, creating channels of communication and cooperation.

All in all, the TBA Commission is well en route to covering and achieving its mission and main objectives.

ACTIVITIES

- TBA-Commission own website

With support from the IAH-Executive (Kellie Nicholson and Ian Dave), the TBA Commission created and fully developed a new website, which is now smoothly running at <https://tba.iah.org/>. The previously website located in IGRAC was deleted.

- Course: “Regional groundwater governance with an emphasis on transboundary aquifers”

Three members of the TBA Commission were invited by CODIA, UNESCO and CeReGAS to deliver a course on Regional Groundwater Governance with an Emphasis on Transboundary Aquifers to Latin American countries, in Spanish (“Curso Regional Gobernanza de Aguas Subterráneas con énfasis en Acuíferos Transfronterizos”).

Laura Movilla, Lucia Samaniego and Alfonso Rivera helped developed this high-level course online from September 3 to 20, 2024.

<https://intercoonecta.aecid.es/programaci%C3%B3n-de-actividades/gobernanza-de-aguas-subterr-neas-con-nfasis-en-acu-feros-transfronterizos>

The course included: the evolution of the transboundary concept, challenges, the global and the North-American scales, basic concepts of governance and International Law, governance and shared management of transboundary waters, and others.

- Invitation to be partner with UNECE

The TBA Commission was invited to be full partner to the UNECE Water Convention Programme of Work (2025-2027) Sub-Programme Area 3.4 on Conjunctive management of transboundary surface waters and groundwaters. The TBA-Commission will particularly be involved in generating partnership and synergies on Item 8: *Promoting integrated water resources management in transboundary basins*,

- Contributions to EC-Water

The TBA Commission contributed to the publication *Good Practices and Lessons Learned in Data-sharing in Transboundary Basins*, which was launched at the [10th session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention](#) (Ljubljana, 23-25 October 2024). Our TBA-Commission contributed six cases.

The contributions were provided by members of the TBA Commission: Marie-Amélie Pétré, Kevin Pietersen, Oleg Podolny, Alfonso Rivera, Rosario Sanchez and Arnaud Sterckx: case studies; 2, 5, 8, 46, 56, and 74.

- Case study 2: *Governance and management of the Stampriet Transboundary Aquifer System (STAS)*
- Case study 5: *Open data access in South Africa and the Gambia*
- Case study 8: *Informal cooperation on transboundary aquifers along the Mexico-U.S.A. border*
- Case study 46 *Machine learning analytics for the Ramotswa Aquifer*
- Case study 56: *Sharing of data and information in the Pretashkent Transboundary Aquifer*
- Case study 74: *Informal cooperation on hydrogeological assessments of the Milk River Transboundary Aquifer.*

- World Congress 2024, Davos, Switzerland

The Transboundary Aquifers Commission was very active at the IAH World Congress in Davos, Switzerland. It organized one full session and a focus event with a very animated panel discussion on: “Groundwater for Peace: Transboundary areas for shared aquifer management”. The session: “On effective transboundary groundwater areas for shared

aquifer management” included 12 very interesting presentations. The Commission was also involved in another session on Surface Water/Groundwater, session 3.05. Conjunctive management of water resources: aquifers at the heart of interactions.

Details of the special sessions, the presentations and the panels’ discussions may be found in the latest issue of the Commission’s Newsletter at https://tba.iah.org/files/2024/12/TBA-Comission-NEWSLETTER_V5_1_Dec-13-2024.pdf

- 6th SADC Groundwater Conference, Maseru Lesotho

Members of the Transboundary Aquifer Commission were instrumental in developing the scientific programme for the 6th Groundwater SADC Groundwater Conference under the theme "Promoting Peace Across Borders through Conjunctive Water Management". The conference presentations can be found at the link: <https://sadc-gmi.org/6th-sadc-groundwater-conference-presentations/>.

- New members

The TBA Commission welcomed two new members in its team, increasing the commission members to 19 individuals from four continents.

- Alice Aureli, former chief of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme UNESCO.
- Avi Burg, Senior researcher, Geological Survey of Israel. He is an active member of the IAH as co-chair of its Karst Commission.

- Newsletters

The TBA Commission continues the production of its Newsletters once to twice a year. The Newsletters are insightful are distributed to 300+ TBA-C followers. The Newsletters are publicly available and can be accessed at the TBA-Commission’s website [HERE](#).

- Numerous publications and conference presentations

Members of the TBA Commission have produced an important number of scientific publications, essays, maps, books, and others, a list of which can be found in the Commission’s Newsletters.

SUMMARY

In its first mandate, the restructured TBA Commission has followed its mission and achieved many of its original objectives. Members of the Commission are very motivated and wish to continue contributing to this important IAH area of expertise for another four-year mandate, if approved.