

## Evaluation Abstract

**Title, author and date of the evaluation report:**

Summary Findings: A Self Assessment Process for the Water and Nature Initiative (WANI), prepared by the IUCN Monitoring and Evaluation Initiative for the IUCN Water and Nature Initiative of the IUCN Wetlands and Water Programme, June 2003, revised January 2004

**Name of project, programme or organizational unit:**

Water and Nature Initiative (WANI)

**Objectives of the project, programme or mandate of the organizational unit:**

To mainstream an ecosystem approach into basin-level policies, planning, and management through promoting:

1. Improved governance;
2. Equity and participation;
3. Use of economic tools and concepts;
4. Use of adequate knowledge and information; and
5. Demonstration of pilot activities.

**IUCN area of specialisation:** Water

**Geographical area:** Global

**Project or programme duration, length of existence of organisational unit:** 2001 – 2006

**Overall budget of the project, programme or organizational unit:** Not specified

**Donor(s):** Royal Netherlands Government, DFID, CIDA, World Water Council, GEF

**Objectives of the evaluation:**

To provide feedback to WANI managers, the Director Global Programme and the WANI Advisory Committee so that they may make any necessary adjustments in a timely and informed manner, thus guiding the future development of WANI.

**Type of evaluation:** Internal Mid-Term Programme Evaluation

**Period covered by the evaluation:** Not specified

**Commissioned by:** The Head of the Wetlands and Water Resources and the WANI Coordinator

**Audience:** WANI managers, the Director Global Programme, and WANI Advisory Committee

**Evaluation team:** Internal

**Methodology used:**

A self assessment methodology using semi-structured interviews was used to obtain responses from three major stakeholder groups at regional and global levels<sup>1</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> It was felt by the management of WANI that it was too early to include Implementing Partners in the self assessment since they were in the early stages of joining WANI. They will be included in future assessments once projects are fully operational. Likewise, donors will be included in later reviews.

1. IUCN staff responsible for managing WANI at regional and global levels (i.e. those with current signed commitments);
2. Senior programme staff (Regional Directors, Programme Coordinators and heads of thematic programmes) at a broader strategic level; and
3. Selected Commission members involved in WANI.

### **Questions of the evaluation:**

The evaluation sought to compile feedback in the following areas:

1. Extent to which the original concept and assumptions behind WANI are still valid;
2. Adequacy of the strategic leadership (i.e. vision, strategy) at regional and global levels;
3. Extent to which IUCN has the capacity to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate WANI projects;
4. Adequacy of fundraising for WANI at regional and global levels;
5. Adequacy of operational support from the IUCN Secretariat;
6. Effectiveness of IUCN's efforts to engage partners in WANI at national and community level and in management frameworks and policies;
7. Factors that have supported/hindered the initiation and implementation of WANI;
8. Risks and suggested improvements.

### **Findings:**

- Overall, WANI is regarded as a well-founded programme, supported by committed and enthusiastic staff, however challenged by capacity and operational issues.
- Most respondents consider WANI relevant to their programme, and view its original concept and assumptions as quite or highly valid. They are supportive but less positive about the innovation and replicability aspects of WANI.
- While global leadership is seen as very or highly satisfactory, regional leadership is considered less so.
- Capacity to plan WANI projects is deemed satisfactory, but slightly less so to implement, monitor, and evaluate projects.
- Fundraising at global level is seen as more satisfactory than at regional level. Co-funding is viewed as adequate, but not so in some regions.
- Although assessed as adequate overall, a significant number of respondents feel that operational support is not very satisfactory.
- Engagement of partners is generally seen as effective.
- Availability of seed funding from the global WANI fund, the commitment of staff and partners, and the emergence of WANI from a strong IUCN Wetlands Programme are among the factors viewed as supporting WANI's initiation and implementation.
- Lack of capacity, problems with co-funding, and a perceived lack of communication and collaboration either between Headquarters and the regions or between WANI and other thematic programmes are among the hindering factors identified.
- The greatest risk factors are the potential failure to secure co-funding and potential failure to sustain and support adequate delivery.

### **Recommendations:**

- Maintain global leadership and strengthening of regional leadership;
- Strengthen IUCN's capacity to implement WANI projects;
- Strengthen monitoring and evaluation implementation at project and initiative level;
- Develop a full WANI learning strategy;
- Further strengthen the WANI fund-raising drive, especially at regional levels;
- Improve the administrative and financial support to WANI at both the global and regional levels;

- Enhance collaboration with thematic programmes at global and regional levels and with commissions;
- Improve communications outside of IUCN.

Specific ways to approach the above recommendations