



## **ECRR River Restoration Community of Practice CoP**

### **- Memorandum of Understanding -**

#### **1. Introduction**

River restoration is a green infrastructure approach increasingly used in resolving river management challenges in Europe. Integrated approaches for river restoration are key issues here. Flood risk, fisheries, urban environment and related human well-being, water quality, biodiversity and habitat can all benefit from river restoration, which thus benefits local economies. Combining different policy objectives into a river restoration plan can contribute to resolving many different challenges. Despite the utility of the approach to resolving river management challenges it is still not in mainstream use.

In 2012 the ECRR and its partners facilitated a consultation meeting of some 130 experts in Ljubljana and Marseille, including a stakeholder discussion in the framework of the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum. It was concluded that an excellent way to move the river restoration agenda forward would be to encourage a number of river basins to pilot and share their progress and experiences.

A practical initiative in which the participating basins can learn from one another and help others to learn from them would be an excellent basis to stimulate further understanding and action. One of the targets set was to establish by 2015, the adoption by at least 3 river basin authorities of best practices of ecological restoration measures and land use planning.

The ECRR has subsequently worked to engage interested river basins in this initiative. A follow-up meeting held in Lyon in March 2013 brought stakeholder representatives from the Arpa, Irpen, Irwell, Órbigo and Rhone basins together to explore the basis for cooperation. It was agreed that together these stakeholders would like to establish a Community of Practice as a means to facilitate their progress towards this goal. This Memorandum of Understanding provides the agreement for this to be undertaken. It outlines the purpose and planned component activities to which the five basin stakeholders and the ECRR agree to undertake.

#### **2. Purpose and challenges**

The Community of Practice (CoP) will facilitate planning in 5 European river basins to include river restoration measures / pilot projects or river restoration plans by 2015.

The CoP will act as a platform where involved stakeholder organisations will convene to explore how to bring river restoration into planning and to stimulate its implementation.

The CoP will provide a window for like-minded organisations in other basins to learn about how river restoration can be brought into mainstream practice.

The types of activities for basin stakeholders will include but not be limited to i. joint problem sharing and solving; ii. cultivating expertise; iii. consolidating best practices; iv. increasing capability levels; v. identifying knowledge gaps and developing shared knowledge resources.

Each participant in the Community of practice will focus on at least one theme selected from, though not limited to, the following: i. Flood risk management (urban and agricultural risks); ii. Hydropower (fisheries and fish biodiversity); iii. Urban development (social cohesion and well-being); iv. Ecosystem connectivity (continuity)

Participating in the CoP challenges basin authorities to broaden their scope and to offer and demonstrate, by open minded attitudes, to share knowledge and best practices with other river restoration partners. In return, all participating may expect input and new information, awareness and (field) experiences from colleague basin authorities. The CoP thus provides expertise and skills, to be able to work more effective and efficiently towards future river restoration projects.

### **3. Scope**

#### River basin stakeholders

##### River Arpa, Armenia.

Partner Authority and signatory: Mrs. Araksa Davoyan, Deputy Head, Water Resources Management Agency of the Ministry of Nature Protection of Armenia

Community of Practice focal point and affiliation: Mr. Vahagn Tonoyan

Main topics: demonstrating integrated planning and practices of river restoration on national and local levels

##### River Irpen, Ukraine.

Partner Authority and signatory: Mr. Mykhailo Romashchenko, director of the Institute of Water Problems and Land Reclamation NAAN

Community of Practice focal point: Mrs. Olga Zhovtonogh, Ukrainian Academy of Agrarian Sciences - Institute of Water Problems and Land Reclamation

Main topics: Integrated river basement and land use planning

##### River Irwell, England.

Partner Authority and signatory: Mr. Alastair Driver, National Conservation Manager, Environment and Business Directorate.

Community of Practice focal point: Mr. Oliver Southgate, Environment Agency, Regional project manager Northwest

Main topics: public education, stakeholders participation and river restoration in urban surroundings

##### River Órbigo, Spain.

Partner Authority and signatory: Mr. Urbano Sanz Cantalejo, Deputy Water Commissioner of the Duero Basin Authority

Community of Practice focal point: Mr. José Ignacio Santillan Ibanez, Office of the "Comisaría de Aguas", Duero River Basin Authority

Topics: integrated approaches for river management , land use and planning

##### River Rhone, France.

Partner Authority and signatory: Mr. Martin Guespereau, Agence de l'eau Rhone-Méditerranée et Corse



Community of Practice focal point: Mr. Benoit Terrier, Direction de la planification et de la programmation Hydromorphologie des eaux de surface et incidences écologiques.  
Main topic: challenges to enhance the ecological potential of rivers, public involvement and sustainable tourism

#### Partner organizations

- DLG Government Service for Land and Water Management  
Partner Authority and signatory: Mr. Michel Boom, head of the Unit for Rural Development and International Projects  
Community of Practice focal point: Hil Kuypers, project manager and Secretary of ECRR
- Wetlands International  
Partner Authority and signatory: dr. Jane Madgwick, general manager  
Community of Practice focal point: Mr. Chris Baker, senior advisor

#### European Centre for River Restoration ECRR

Partner Authority and signatory : Mr. Bart Fokkens, Chairman  
Community of Practice focal point: Mr. Hil Kuypers, Secretary

## **4. Definitions**

Participating Stakeholder Organisation: Signatory to the MoU and active member of the CoP responsible for bringing river restoration into river planning and management in its own basin and committed to using the results of the CoP to achieve this. Stakeholders are responsible for implementing the obligations under this MoU.

Partner: The CoP relies also on the input, facilities and expertise of partner organizations. Partners of the CoP (WI and DLG) will undertake, whereas necessary together to facilitate preparation of field trips, workshops and trainings. Partners can assist the stakeholders in their activities to make the CoP a success.

ECRR: European Centre for River Restoration; the secretariat of this network acting as manager and facilitator of this MoU and of the CoP.

## **5. Policy**

The CoP is officially active from September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013 until at least April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015, when the next WWF7 will be closing. Unofficially, the CoP started during its first kick off meeting in March, 2013 in France. The ECRR will facilitate establishment of an annual plan by basin stakeholders. The implementation of the plan will be the responsibility of the stakeholder partners. ECRR will support the participants by stimulating expert engagement by partners to its network on a needs basis in line with the work plan.

The CoP has the ambition to grow, starting now in 5 different regions, towards a broader group of participating river basins all over pan Europe, applying new tools like the RiverWiki etc. and to present its efforts and results at the next World Water Forum WWF7 in Korea, April 2015.

## **6. Ambitions and Intentions**

All participants agree to provide activities and services to the CoP, on a voluntarily base and according to their means and possibilities. Activities to be provided are following:



Field trips: Each participating stakeholder organisation agrees to host and organise one field visit during the lifetime of this MoU and its preparation phase since the start at the WWF6 session in Marseille, March 2012. This may include support of logistic and local transportation costs and other costs, within the limits of their financial capabilities.

Workshops: Each participating stakeholder organisation agrees to host and organise at least one workshop in association with a field trip and one on-line meeting for the CoP during the lifetime of this MoU.

Trainings: Each participating stakeholder organisation agrees to organise at least one training or workshop about one of the agreed themes, during the lifetime of the MoU  
In case of lacking own financial means, obligations may depend on the possible finding of a donor organisation to cover all the costs. It may also be considered by stakeholders to incorporate or assign a small part of project budgets to the CoP

Each participating stakeholder organisation agrees to provide guides, documents, studies etc.. targeted to the needs of the partner's pilot basin and sharing these through the online platform.

The ECRR undertakes, whereas necessary together with support of its partner organisations, to facilitate preparation of field trips, workshops and trainings. Key means will be the organisations of teleconferences, the establishment and maintenance of a on-line platform for dialogue, document sharing and management, agenda management and by communication via ECRR network tools (website, newsletter)

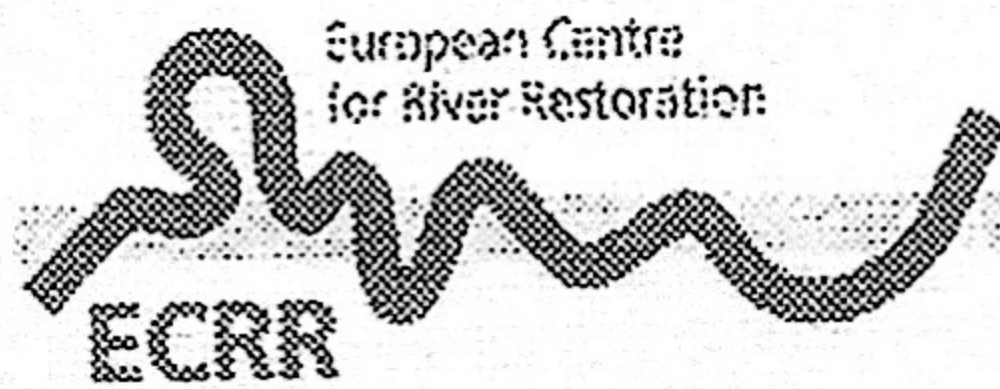
The ECRR undertakes, together with the partner organisations, activities to facilitate the visibility of the CoP and its key findings and results in the wider network of ECRR members, partner organisations and relevant external target groups to promote the importance of river restoration, the barriers to its wider implementation and the ways these can be overcome. This will include engagement in the next World Water Forum to report back on results from the 6<sup>th</sup> World water Forum commitment.

The ECRR and participating basin stakeholder organisations undertake to seek and secure funding to underpin and strengthen the implementation of this MoU.

The CoP will be facilitated and managed by the ECRR. Participating stakeholder organisations will agree a detailed work plan, reviewed annually in line with the intent set out by this MoU. The ECRR Management Board will receive periodic reports on activity and progress and provide advisory guidance to the CoP through the ECRR.

## **7. Status and updates to the MoU**

This MOU forms a framework for mutual cooperation and has not any legal official status. It confirms a free voluntary intention of all partners to perform on agreed activities and to use ECRR and its partners within their possibilities available. The MoU will be managed by the ECRR. Updates can be suggested at any time by a participating organisation and the ECRR and agreed based on consent of all involved organisations.



Vienna, September 12, 2013

Agreed and signed for:

River basin stakeholders

Rhone, France

Benoit Terrier

Irwell, England

Alastair Driver

Arpa, Armenia

Araks Davoyan

Irpen, Ukraine

Olga Zhovtonog

Orbigó, Spain

Urbano Sanz Cantalejo

Partner organizations

DLG Netherlands

Michel Boom

Wetlands International

Jane Madgwick

ECRR

Bart Fokkens