

GMM Approved Annual (Financial) Report 2018

THE ECRR ASSOCIATION MEMBER AND PARTNER ORGANISATIONS



Finnish Environment Institute



Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management



1. Board

Since the GMM2107 the Board has met 6 times and only in virtual meetings by conference calls. The first task the Board was involved with, was the operational start of the Association. Next to the already available articles, the registration at the Chamber of Commerce the Board and a bank account, the Board entered a number of relevant and partly obligated (liability) insurances. Then action was taken concerning the GMM2017 actions, as the elaboration of certain governance documents. The results are on the agenda of the GMM2018.

At the same time they had to take care of the operational tasks concerning the operations of the website, publishing the newsletter, tracking and feeding the Twitter account, communication with the members and the network subscribers, preparing and reporting the Board meetings etc..

And last but not least the Board had to start the implementation of the workplan, including the collaborative workplan with Wetlands International European Association (WIEA). In connection with the last point the Director and the Policy Officer for water and rivers of the WIEA participated both almost always in the ECRR Board meeting.

2. Operational activities.

Website.

The website was kept up to date at a regular basis. It is a LIFE obligation to maintain the RESTORE website(information) until the end of 2018. For 2019 an upgrade or renewal of the website, in combination with a switch to another type of newsletter(s) is foreseen. The results of the communications survey will be used for this new development (see below). Although the preliminary results show that the website is not frequently visited by ECRR (network) members, it is quite remarkable that many news items are viewed more than 500 up to 1500 times in a short period. While many publications are downloaded more than 1500 up till 3500 times. This is apparently done by a large unknow audience, mainly from Greater Europe and otherwise from all over the world. The RiverWiki case studies of the website is managed and operated by the River Restoration Centre in UK and the information section, including the RESTORE sections, by the ECRR.

Newsletter.

In 2018 three ECRR Newsletters were issued. The editors, working in a team for more than three years, evaluated their work and products at the beginning of 2018. A summary report about this evaluation was published in Newsletter 2018-1. This evaluation can be seen as a first step towards the communication channels survey, carried out in the summer of 2018. The co-editing, design and production of the newsletter is done by the Russian Institute for Integrated Water Management and Problems (RosNIVKh) and the Iberian River Restoration Centre is takes also part in the editing.

The newsletter has about 2500 direct and indirect (by re-distributers like the GWP and Ramsar) subscribers. While another 1000 to 2000 are per edition downloaded from the website.

Twitter account

The twitter account @ECRRNetwork is low profile operated and has about 850 followers. This could be more if a communication specialist, especially in social media, would become available to operate this and preferably also a LinkedIn account in close cooperation with at least one ECRR Board member.

Communication with ECRR members and newsletter / network subscribers.

Due to a lack of time / capacity the communication with the ECRR members (organisations) could have been more / better. Now only the most essential information and news is communicated with the members as a group and only in a few cases the communication is more individual and specific. This should really be intensified.

Quite a lot of newsletter / network members approach the ECRR for various matters. Although we try to answer or, often asked for, help, this is either not practical or possible. Interesting is that most (email) requests follow a search at our website, which they found already very helpful and therefore expect that we can answer easily any other question. In 2018 we received only a few negative comments, some of them concerning a broken link to web documents. Others that we do not show river restoration job vacancies and the rest relating funding support for river restoration projects.

Coordinator operations and Board support.

This task was on a voluntary basis done by one person, part time (ca. 40% fte).

3. ECRR Workplan 2018

GWP Summer School in Warsaw, Poland

An ECRR representative participated as a presenter / lecturer in the GWPCEE Summer School held at the Warsaw University of Life Sciences in Poland, in July. The 2018 theme was: Towards 2030 Agenda: A summer school for climate change, innovation and youth advocacy in water management. The contribution was on river restoration best practices. A summary report was published in the ECRR Newsletter 2018-2.

Workshop River Connectivity Restoration in Lyon, France

Back to back with the I.S. Rivers Conference an ECRR workshop was organised by the ECRR coordinator in June in France. There were about 10 participants, who recommended the ECRR to emphasize on this topic in 2019 with various activities.

I.S. Rivers 2018

A Board member and the coordinator participated in this conference that had two ECRR labeled workshops on Ecological Continuity and on Restoration and Ecosystem Approaches. The Agency for Biodiversity, CIREF and Syke, as members of the ECRR, were co-organiser of the workshop. In each workshop participated almost 100 participants. I.S. Rivers organisers asked for more cooperation with the ECRR in the future.

1st European River Summit

This Summit was held in Sarajevo, organised by RiverWatch, WIEA and other European organizations. An CIRF/ECRR representative participated in this meeting and had the chance to network with some national, European and overseas organizations (mainly NGO's).

Dam Removal Europe Workshop in Hudiksvall, Sweden.

The ECRR Coordinator participated in and presented at the workshop on River basin connectivity and dam management – The importance of sharing practices through knowledge management. The workshop had about 150 participants from across all Europe. The presentations were generally more about river restoration than about dam removal. However, dam removal is apparently an important driver for river restoration in general. A summary report was published in the ECRR 2018-3 Newsletter.

Euro-INBO 2018 in Sevilla in Spain.

This conference is organised for the implementation of the European Water Directives. ECRR was invited to give a keynote presentation in this conference about The interest of combining hydraulic infrastructure and nature-based solutions to face the issue of climate change. About

230 participants from about 43 countries . Prior to the conference a workshop on A report of the conference and the workshop was published in the 2018-3 Newsletter.

Mini-symposium at the ECRR GMM2018 in Ede, the Netherlands.

To the occasion of the ECRR GMM2018 a thematic mini-symposium, followed by a field excursion in combination with a field excursion was organised. The general theme was the “WFD and river restoration evaluation” and is connected to the WFD Refit. About 20 international and 30 national participants participated.

National river restoration events.

A number of ECRR members, mainly the National Centres for River Restoration organised in 2018 national river restoration events. This was the case for Italy-by CIRF, Iberia-by CIREF, Norway-by the Norwegian Environment Agency, UK-by the River Restoration Centre-Finland by Syke, France-by the Agency for Biodiversity. All these national events are at least publicized, stimulated and often, directly or indirectly, supported by the ECRR.

International River Symposium.

So far, the ECRR has organised 6 International River Symposia, the last two featured the European RiverPrize of the International River Foundation and were followed by a European River Symposium in 2016, also featuring the, 3rd, European RiverPrize. ECRR was, in partnership with a number of European organisations, a co-organiser of this Symposium. Nowadays there is a call from the audience for an international River Restoration Conference organised, in partnership by the ECRR and partners and if possible again featuring the European RiverPrize, which would be the 4th prize. This symposium could be organised in 2020 or 2021, as the frequency of an international river restoration symposium should be about 4 to 5 years. Contacts by the coordinator during a visit to Vienna with an European and an Australian representative of the International River Foundation learned that they are considering to organize their International River Symposium in 2022 in Europe. And preferably in partnership with the existing partnership for the European River (Restoration) conferences. This means that an European River (Restoration) could be held in 2020. And then of course again featuring the awarding of the European RiverPrize. IRF assistance for fundraising for the latter should give an impulse to the funding of future European Riverprizes. During the visit in Vienna, the coordinator visited the WWFCEE, ICPDR, IAWD and UBA and spoke with representatives about organising the European River Synposium and European RiverPrize in 2020 again in a partnership as before. All are very keen in their interest to do this again.

4. Collaborative workplan ECRR & WIEA.

Workspace

Under the assumption that the ECRR members want to cooperate and work within the framework of the ECRR Association a special Workspace was developed that can be used for this purposes. The workspace was just introduced to the members, but only a few members joined this workspace so far. The reason for this is mainly, that the commonly collaboration on certain ECRR projects has not really started yet. However, the first projects are being started and will hopefully stimulate the use of the workspace. This would be really important, because this will the cooperation not only make efficient, but moreover also effective with respect to the needed combination of knowledge, experiences and capacities. This could lead to a lively network of member and other organisations working on future integration in future plans, projects and activities on river restoration at transnational level ongoing.

Communications review and revisions.

An ECRR communications (channels) survey was, with guidance of WIEA, carried out by a contracting communication company. Their products show the results and advices and how to make the communications (channels) better fit for purpose, by structural changes to the website, the newsletter and specific content produced for the ECRR media, like website, newsletter(s) and social media. These products and recommendations were on the agenda of the GMM2018.

Update of the River Wiki.

This activity should help to reinforce the ECRR as a competent knowledge platform and catalyst for river restoration implementation, through recognition at EC level. Wetlands International assisted the members in adding and updating river restoration projects from mid-June till end of August. Based on the exercise, Wetlands International suggests a number of actions for further improvement of the wiki. The aim of the updated and complemented information collected within the RiverWiki is to serve as underpinning data/arguments/cases for an ECRR branded or joint position paper to EC for the WFD REFIT process. The idea of the cases put forward by the ECRR members, is to show how the implemented WFD does deliver and what the reasons for bad state of EU waters are and how implementation can be improved. Also links to the Floods Directive implementation or examples of synergies between WFD and SEA/EIA directives are relevant. Such analysis of the new (and existing) wiki entries is needed in order to identify evidence to underpin the ECRR response to the EC consultation. The findings and further steps will be discussed in the GMM2018.

WFD Review.

In this action key knowledge gaps/ needs/ issues in river restoration, based on case studies in Europe, are being identified and promoted. These basins will be exemplary with regard to experienced barriers to implementation of the Water Directives and opportunities for river restoration measures and the conservation of free flowing rivers in Europe. The first findings to produce the deliverables were gathered and are the basis for an ECRR branded or joint position paper for WFD review to be submitted in the EC stakeholder consultation before 1st March 2019. WIEA assisted in preparing the process for collecting best practices, underpinning data/arguments and technical contributions from ECRR members. WIEA will advise on the WFD position paper. The progress of this activity was, in relation to the timing of the review, discussed in the GMM2018. The conclusion was that although the time and available capacity of the ECRR and its MO's to carry out the reviewing activity were limited, ECRR should emphasize on a contribution. And at least with filling in parts of the questionnaire and producing a thematic, on river restoration issues, position / policy paper.

5. ECRR's General Member Meeting 2018

Day 1

ECRR's General Members Meeting 2018 was held on 13 and 14 November and hosted by Wetlands International – European Association in Ede, the Netherlands. The formal Members Meeting was on day one. First of all a new member was welcomed, the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management. Besides a mini-symposium and field trip were held on the second day. Moreover participants exchanged practices of Water Framework Directive implementation in different European countries.

The ECRR has now 16 member organisations across greater Europe including government agencies, topic centers and NGOs working in the field of river restoration. At the Members Meeting, the ECRR members discussed the past year's activities, the network's strategy and the

workplan for the upcoming year. In 2018, Wetlands International and the ECRR joined forces in a collaborative workplan.

Day 2.

The symposium and field trip on day two were organised by ECRR’s member, the Dutch Foundation for Applied Water Research, (STOWA). It was joined by members of the Dutch Community of Practice for Rivers and Streams. In the morning, after introductions of Ernest de Groot, chairman of the Dutch Community of stream and river restoration and ECRR’s chairman, Martin Janes from the RRC in UK, participants from Finland and Norway presented practices of river connectivity restoration and examples of how river restoration supports the objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive. STOWA presented its publication on (eco)system analysis for river restoration, specifically for implementing cost-effective measures for the improvement of ecological water quality, based on Ecological Key Factors (EKFs); The explanation STOWA demonstrated that having a better and practical understanding of the factors influencing aquatic ecosystem functioning can help define specific measures as well as policy goals.

During the field trip, the group visited a project on small river restoration at the Renkums Beekdal. The water authority explained how it had integrated ecological and heritage values during the restoration of the brook valley. The next stop along the Waal river showed a more technical solution for reconciling inland navigation and ecology in a large lowland river by the construction of a longitudinal training dam. An explanation was given by Tom Buijse of Deltares Institute, that the dam was constructed as an experiment under the Room for the River Programme and currently its sound effects on biodiversity and morphology are being monitored.

- The meeting was a great success, showing the present improving status of the ECRR and demonstrating the synergy of the cooperation between ECRR and Wetlands International European Association. Moreover, the active participation by the members created high expectations for promising future developments of the ECRR, being reported in the course of the year 2019 by a series of articles in the ECRR newsletters.

Financial report 2018.

ECRR Annual Balance 2018			
Balance 1/1/2018	€	3.426,10	
Revenues		Costs	
Member Fees 2018	€	8.500,00	Bank costs € 126,00
			Insurance costs € 414,55
			Web (hosting) costs € 500,00
			Collaborative workplan € 10.000,00
Total	€	8.500,--	Total € 11.040,55
Result	€	-2.540,55	
Balance 31/12/2018	€	985,55	

Explanatory remarks concerning costs made outside this justified budget.

- ✓ Board members and coordinator have no (direct) costs claimed made for the regular fulfilling of the activities in relation to their position with the ECRR.
- ✓ Board members and coordinator have no travel and hotel costs claimed for international activities. These were reimbursed by their employer or covered by themselves.
- ✓ The management and operation costs for the RiverWiki were covered by the RRC / Environmental Agency UK.
- ✓ The hosting costs for the ECRR website were covered by Wetlands International.
- ✓ The design and production costs for the newsletters were covered by the Russian National River Restoration Centre / Institute for Integrated Water Management and Problems.
- ✓ GWP covered the costs of the ECRR lecturer / presenter for the Summer School in Warsaw, Poland.
- ✓ I.S. Rivers provided the facilities for the (back to back) ECRR workshop and for the two ECRR conference workshops.
- ✓ The costs for the year subscription of Citrix GoTo Meeting system were sponsored.
- ✓ Hosting costs for the GMM2017 were covered by the French National Centre for River Restoration / Agency for Biodiversity, and for GMM2018 these costs are covered by Wetlands International and STOWA.

These costs amount easily a total of € 20,000,-- to € 25.000,-- making us very thankful to the supporters and contributors. But it shows also how effective an efficient collaboration can be, and we invite our member organisations for using their creativity as much as possible to reinforce the operation of the ECRR development and operation.



Participants of the ECRR General Members Meeting on 13/14 November 2018, Wetlands International European Association, Ede – Wageningen, the Netherlands © ECRR