

Integrated Water Resources Management: A 'Small' Step for Conceptualists, a Giant Step for Practitioners

(LUIS E. GARCÍA, 2009).

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UNITED NATIONS

ECLAC





- Belize Independent nation on the northeast coast of Central America,
- Total area: 8,867 mi²,
- Total renewable water resources per capita 57,838.7 m³/year – (2017),
- Capital: City of Belmopan,
- Official language: English,
- Population: 430,000 (2021 est.),
- Population: 491,000 (2030 proj.).

THE ORIGINS OF THE IWRM CONCEPT

- Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) – globally recognized as the best concept for the management of water resources.

The IWRM concept is linked to:

- The 1996 formation of the Global Water Partnership
- The 1992 Dublin Conference on water
- The 1992 Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit
- The 1977 Mar del Plata conference on water
- The 1960's 'Reasonable Use Principle'

IT IS NOT A NOVEL CONCEPT!

IWRM

RELEVANT CONCEPT OR IRRELEVANT BUZZWORD?

(Pieter van der Zaag, 2005)

- 1992 – Belize initiated its efforts to implement IWRM (FAO BZE/TCP/2353)
- 2004 – Established Pro Tempore Water Commission
- 2008 – Approved National Water Policy
- 2009 – Approved National Adaptation Strategy to address Climate Change in the Water Sector in Belize
- 2010 – Enacted National Integrated Water Resources Act (NIWRA)
- 2013 – NIWRA Organizational Review and Institutional Development
- 2014 – NIWRA Financial Sustainability Plan
- 2015 – Commenced National Integrated Water Resources Act

Belize has laid the Foundation for the Implementation of IWRM

SDG 6 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Indicator 6.5.1 “Degree of Integrated Water Resources Management implementation”.

United Nations Environmental Programme evaluated Belize’s Degree of Integrated Water Resources Management implementation by assessing the four key components of IWRM.

Belize’s 2017 country baseline IWRM score was a low 20%.

Component	Level	Score
Enabling environment	Low	28
Institutions and participation	Low	26
Management instruments	Low	18
Financing	Very Low	8

Belize at 20% ?

IS IMPLEMENTATION OF IWRM ELUDING BELIZE? OR IS IT AN IRRELEVANT BUZZWORD?

- UNEP's Assessment indicated that:
 - Financing is a major issue
 - Financing potable water is the highest priority
 - Social Investment Fund \$6,532,480. Infrastructure
 - Rural Water Systems \$1,149,852. Operations
 - National Hydrological Service \$1,280,191. Management
- (Belize Ranks 17 in world for water availability)**
- Management Instruments is the next significant challenge
 - No National Water Plans
 - No National Water Quality Plans – except for Drinking water

IWRM IS A RELEVANT, YET ELUSIVE AND FUZZY CONCEPT

(Pieter van der Zaag, 2005)

- UNEP Evaluation – Institutions and Participation
 - There is overlapping water responsibilities among Government Agencies,
 - There is duplication of activities and unaddressed gaps,
 - Competition for scarce financial and human resources.
- UNEP Evaluation – Enabling Environment
 - Belize included all the principles of IWRM in:
 - Water Policy, Water Strategy, Legislations, Institutional Plans & Financial Plans
 - Belize articulated the principles of IWRM in:
 - Belize National Food and Agriculture Policy, Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy, Horizon 2030 National Development Framework for Belize.

Sadly - Belize has made Little to No Progress in advancing SDG 6.5.2 since 2017

THE POWER OF POLITICS !

Why is Belize's Sustainable Development Indicator 6.5.1 at 20%?

Despite the strong foundation and the legal obligations

The Water Resources Authority (NIWRA) has not been realized

(Politicians will not willingly relinquish control and management of a natural resource)

No NIWRA

No National Water Plan

No National Water Quality Control Plan

No Water Allocation Plan

No Transfer of Water Resources Knowledge

Belize's stage is set for advancing SDI 6.5.1 and the sustainable management of its water resources.

All Belize needs is – POLITICAL WILL!

Just Do it Belize!

ECLAC'S INTERVENTIONS TO ADVANCE IWRM IMPLEMENTATION IN BELIZE

- ECLAC urge the Government of Belize to:
 1. Constitute the National Integrated Water Resources Authority (NIWRA),
 2. Enact the legally mandated regulations for the financial sustainability of the NIWRA,
 3. Provide commencement funding for the operationalization of the NIWRA,
 4. Build human resources capacity in water resources management,
 5. Access CARICOM technical water resources experts to support the operationalization of the NIWRA,
 6. Mainstream water resources issues into all the decision-making processes,
 7. Encourage the inclusion of water resources knowledge at all levels of education.

THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION



BELIZE GREAT BLUE HOLE

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