



**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Institute for Water Resources**

On the Web:
<http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil>

Media Contact:
+1 (703) 428-9090

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 2, 2012

PIANC and Inland Waterborne Transport Activities at the World Water Forum

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA. IWR Director Mr. Bob Pietrowsky and Ms. Anne Cann participated in a Preparatory Workshop and a side event "Inland Waterway Transport in Times of Globalization" on March 13, 2012. These activities, along with a tour of the Port of Marseille on March 14, were organized by the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) as part of the World Water Forum in Marseille, France. The purpose of the sessions was to bring together stakeholders in river navigation from around the world to discuss common issues and problems and create a global framework and network to pool knowledge and experience, thus advancing inland waterways as a sustainable form of transport.

Mr. Pietrowsky presented an overview of the U.S. inland waterway system, emphasizing that inland waterborne transport is essential to developing countries as well as mature economies. He placed inland waterborne transport in the context of integrated water resources management, as one of many water uses which must be balanced in a river basin. Mr. Pietrowsky also discussed the most pressing issues confronting inland waterways in the US: environmental sustainability, information technology, intermodal connections, financing, and aging infrastructure. Representatives from several other inland waterway systems around the world also discussed their major issues.

On March 13, Dr. Will Logan of IWR and the International Center for Integrated Water Resources Management (ICIWaRM), under the auspices of UNESCO, participated in Session 2.1.2 "IWRM for All: Make Water Resource Planning a Reality by Adopting IWRM Master Plans." Dr. Logan represented the PIANC solution "Inland Waterborne Transport as a Solution" in a roundtable discussion.

On March 14, the Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy, Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), spoke at a PIANC side event "Inland Waterways—a Sustainable Transport Solution." Ms. Darcy presented an introduction about the U.S. inland waterway system and made a compelling case that, compared to other modes of transport, waterways are more sustainable economically, environmentally and socially. In the same session, Dr. Yutaka Sunohara, President of PIANC Japan, discussed the impacts of last year's tsunami on a canal which parallels the coast, and water transport resilience and recovery in his country. Mr. Jean-Louis Mathurin of the Rhone Commission in France discussed integrated water resources management and technical innovations in that waterway system and the new water-saving locks being built in Panama. The session was chaired by Mr. Geoffroy Caude, President of PIANC International. Mr. Caude also presented a summary of PIANC's technical work on sustainability aspects of inland waterborne transport. Mr. Pietrowsky and Ms. Cann helped organize and attended this event.

More about Inland Waterway Transport in Times of Globalization

Otto Schwetz, President of the [Danube pan-European VII Corridor](#) and a member of PIANC Austria, listed these issues: infrastructure management, multimodal ports, fleet technology, river information services (RIS) on river conditions and

traffic management, and education of personnel. He noted that the low political priority of inland waterways is a challenge in the Danube region. (It is also an issue in the U.S.)

Hans Guttman, CEO of the [Mekong River Commission](#) (MRC), cited integrated water resources management as the overriding principle of this commission, which includes Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia (Myanmar and China are observers). Freedom of navigation is an important tenet. The MRC is aiming to increase international trade by providing sustainable, effective and safe navigation on the Mekong. MRC issues are slightly different than in the more developed river basins. In the Mekong aging infrastructure is not the problem; they instead face a lack of infrastructure. Other problems areas include aids to navigation; creation of electronic charts; and standards, rules and regulations. On the Mekong River there is a 14-meter difference in depth between the wet and dry seasons. Transportation of people is very important on the Mekong, as well as fishing, which provides 80% of the animal protein in the average person's diet. During flooding, the only access to many locales is by water, making river transport even more crucial. The MRC is also concerned with the safe transport of hazardous goods.

Harrie de Leijer, Director of [Strategy Panteia](#), discussed his recent work in China. His company has developed a "Rivers of the World" partnership between the Netherlands and other countries. In China, the Yangtze River moves 1.3 billion tons of freight annually. Protecting the environment is a major issue. The Asia Development Bank now has a sustainable transport policy which includes waterways. The issues cited in the sustainable transport policy are: how to increase the inland waterborne transport modal share (lower entry barriers, incentives); how to improve the environmental record, especially for hazardous cargo and vessel waste; how to finance infrastructure expansion and improvements; efficiency improvements; links to other modes; safety; and education of personnel.

An interesting innovative financing scheme in China was described in which a hydropower dam was constructed and operated by the Ministry of Transport and the revenue from sale of electricity was used to pay for the adjacent navigation infrastructure.

Mr. Luiz Ribeiro, General Coordinator for Economic Planning at the [Brazilian Ministry of Transport](#), discussed the Parana-Paraguay Waterway in South America. Brazil's National Plan of Logistics and Transport aims to increase the modal share of waterways from the current 13 percent to 29 percent in 2025. Waterways have a high potential in Brazil, but relatively low use. Currently 45 million tons are transported by waterways, but the capacity is 180 million tons. Problems and issues identified by Mr. Ribeiro include: insufficient regulatory framework; no integration with other modes; need for more dredging, especially maintenance dredging; need for a streamlined procedure to obtain environmental licenses; and navigation barriers that exist due to hydropower dams without locks. Similar to the Ohio-Mississippi system in the U.S., the Parana-Paraguay Rivers run through rich agricultural regions, so there is great potential for the inland waterborne transport of grain.

A "Common Statement" was developed and endorsed by all parties. The next step is to convene a meeting in conjunction with PIANC's SmartRivers Conference in September 2013 in Maastricht, the Netherlands and Liege, Belgium. Additional details are available on the [Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine](#) website.

Learn More

For more information, visit www.iwr.usace.army.mil.