

SIWI to host the first UNESCO Centre in Sweden

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, decided yesterday to establish a research centre in Sweden with a focus on international water issues. The centre will be run by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) in collaboration with Uppsala University and the University of Gothenburg. With its focus on transboundary water cooperation, the centre will be one of a kind.

The majority of the world's countries share water resources in some form, such as rivers and lakes. Consequently cooperation with other States on this vital resource is essential. The Swedish UNESCO Centre will focus on equitable water cooperation and aims to develop research and knowledge on transboundary water resource management. The centre, which will be located at SIWI, will also concentrate on how to establish and develop effective water partnerships despite contexts of political conflict.

- The global population is growing. By 2050 we expect to be nine billion people. However, we are unable to increase the quantity of water resources available to us. Consequently, it is important to ensure we create good cooperation mechanisms around water for the future, and especially in relation to transboundary waters. Together with the universities of Uppsala and Gothenburg, we celebrate the decision to establish a UNESCO Centre on water cooperation in Sweden, says SIWI's CEO Torngny Holmgren.

81 UNESCO Centre's exist in different parts of the world, with 18 of them focusing on water related issues. This is the first time that a UNESCO Centre has been established in Sweden and the first time a Centre will focus on transboundary cooperation. This new UNESCO Centre will help Sweden deepen its involvement in water issues and disseminate Swedish research in this area. The focus will draw from the strong tradition of research on water conflict and cooperation that exists in Sweden today.

- Access to clean water is a critical global issue for the future. The establishment of a UNESCO Centre for Water Cooperation in Sweden will assist in increasing UNESCO capacities on water cooperation and provide concrete support in regions where conflict over shared waters is strong, says Inger Davidson, president of the Swedish National Commission for UNESCO.

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and was established with the goal of creating peace through increased cooperation between countries. UNESCO was formed in 1946 and currently has 195 member countries. Sweden has been a member since 1950.

Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) is a policy institute that develops knowledge and informs decision-makers about smart water policy and sustainable development. SIWI research and acts as an advisor in a number of water-related areas. The Institute organizes the World Water Week in Stockholm will host the Stockholm Water Prize, Stockholm Junior Water Prize and the Stockholm Industry Water Award.

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