

ICOLD European Club - Working Group on Levees and Flood Defences PROGRESS REPORT

April 2016

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During the 2015 ICOLD Annual Meeting and Congress in Stavanger, after its official creation by the EURCOLD board during its meeting there, the first formal (start-up) meeting of the EURCOLD Working Group on Levees and Flood Defences took place, with 33 representatives and observers from 11 countries being present.

Two weeks later, the Terms of Reference were sent to the EURCOLD Board.

According to the terms of Reference, the Working Group will produce a report (or a set of reports) presenting analyses and their results on at least one of the following general topics, that have been agreed upon collectively:

- An overview of facts on levee and flood protection structures / systems (statistics on the situation in each participating country: length of levees, population and area protected, management situation, regulation, recent failures and consequences, ...);
- Documenting similarities and differences in large dams, small dams and levees and their best practices and failure mechanisms, taking into account geographical and other (e.g. institutional, risk) context issues;
- System approach of dams and levees: How do upstream dams and downstream levees interact in terms of their presence, requirements, safety and operation;
- Identifying topic areas not yet covered by the International Levee Handbook (ILH):
 - topics where ILH extensions could have large added value for dam practitioners;
 - topics requiring further study under the umbrella of levees.

During the autumn, a general inventory was made on preferences of the members, after which the first activity was started: an inventory of facts and figures on levees.

Preparations were made by NL+F for a web-questionnaire on levee facts and figures, which was launched in early 2016. As it turned out, many Working Group members had difficulties in getting the requested information, and the responses did not always provide the ready-to-use material for a report.

In February 2016, the Working Group chairman visited Delft (NL) to discuss progress of the Working Group, and to explore synergy opportunities with the SafeLevee levee failure inventory project of Delft University. It was decided to accelerate the progress, by abandoning the Questionnaire, and to switch directly to the preparation of an Inventory Report on (characteristics, risks and governance of) Levees, intended as an overall rather than 100% complete and correct inventory. A Report Template was distributed to the Working Group Members in the second half of March 2016. By mid-April, near-complete chapters were received for the Czech Republic, France and The Netherlands, while Germany, England and Finland were making good progress on their chapters. Except for Finland, these countries (as well as Poland and Hungary) each count several thousand kilometers of levee with major protected value behind them, clearly showing that levees are a significant topic for many European Countries, all the more so because in several countries, levees and dams partly or fully fall under the same legislation and regulations.

A small but highly relevant activity lies in the fact that some countries submitted a (partly co-ordinated) Question Proposal on levees for the ICOLD-2018-congress in Vienna). Although the proposal did not make it to the short list of Congress Questions on the Agenda of the ICOLD Annual Meeting at Johannesburg, one sub-item (Risk from floods on embankments; Data of accidents. Risk analysis. Efficiency and cost of solutions.) under Question Proposal 2 (Safety and Risk Analysis) may anyways be of relevance to levees.

Two final things are worth mentioning:

- Our chairman has recently been to the USA (USSD annual conference 2016, in Dever) and has discussed co-operation opportunities with the USS-Dams (the USA COLD) levee Committee (permanent committee, and not a WG) coordinated with the USA Levee Safety Coalition. USSD will support the EURCOLD WG in its objective to promote levees as a relevant topic for the dam community, and ICOLD in particular. USSD will also participate in the preparation of the report on the levee situation by writing a chapter on the USA situation;
- Besides the present active members (Czech Republic, England, Finland, France, Italy, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia, Spain), Romania has recently become a Working Group member as well;

Outlook to further activities:

- Preparations will soon be made for a template for a second report "Comparison of Levees and Dams"
- A website – hosted by IRSTEA is under preparation. It will be linked with the EURCOLD website.
- We intend to publish a 3-4-monthly Newsletter, if one of our members becomes editor.
- Our next Working Group Meeting is planned on Monday October 17 during the FLOODrisk2016 conference in Lyon (France). There may be an additional informal meeting during the EURCOLD symposium in Antalya (Turkey), to be confirmed.
- For 2017, we plan to have our main meeting during the ICOLD Annual Meeting in Prague (Czech Republic), July 3-7. There might be a possibility (to be confirmed) to join-up with a mid-term workshop of SafeLevee in The Netherlands, but no (approximate) date is known yet.

Situation in terms of membership – current members:

COUNTRY	NAME
CZ	Jaromir RIHA
D	Reinhard POHL
ES	Ignacio ESCUDER
FI	Juha LAASONEN
FI	Ms Eija ISOMÄKI
FR	Rémy TOURMENT (chairman)
FR	Jean MAURIN
FR	Thibaut MALLET
FR	Yann DENIAUD
FR	Bruno BEULLAC
HU	Ms Katalin SZABÓ
IT	Matteo SBARIGIA
NL	Marcel BOTTEMA (secr)
NL	Cees Henk OOSTINGA
NL	Robert SLOMP
NL	Bas JONKMAN
NL	Meindert VAN
NL	Bob MAASKANT
NL	Hans JANSSEN
PL	Janus ZALESKI
PL	Krzysztof RADZICKI
PL	Edmund SIEINSKI
RO	Altan ABDULAMIT
RO	Sorin RANDASU
RU	Timofei IVANOV
SLO	Andrej KRYZANOWSKI
SLO	Ms Nina HUMAR
UK	Jackie BANKS
UK	Jonathan SIMM

NOTE – members who are not yet appointed by their national committees are kindly requested to let us know, and organize this within short notice.