

CAESAR – Project – Communication and impact
Cooperative applied environmental systems research of the urban-rural interface
Sustainability in water management and land use in the Havana region

FP5 - ICA4-CT-2002-10019
<http://www.umweltforschung-kuba.de/>

Take up by managers, policy makers, educators

Project results (GIS, databases etc.) were given to governmental planning institutions (see 1. and 2.). A multimedia documentation on project providing results, with an additional focus on environmental problems and local solutions, was elaborated and will be given to schools and other educational institutions to contribute to improvement of information for environmental education. As participants in the research were universities a huge amount of diploma, master- and doctoral theses were realised. The Faculty of Geography of the University of Havana won the national prize for the best applied environmental project from the Ministry of Higher Education. Managers, policy makers, educators and local leaders (and through them members of civil society) have taken up the ideas of IWRM as communicated in the CAESAR-project.

Contribution to capacity building legacy

Through the intensive transfer of knowledge to the relevant institutions and local collaborators (see above) the project contributed to personal capacity building. The catalogue of project recommendations included recommendations for institutional capacity building. Their development is an issue of future activities.

Longer-term institutional cooperation

The project led to the progressive intensification of institutional cooperation. The consortium continues work on the take-up activities (Environmental Park Río Quibú). A problem has been that the lack of funds related directly to the implementation of project results after funding from the FP for the project has finished.

Proposals for further activities will be elaborated amongst members of the CAESAR-consortium and local collaborating partners

Enduring legacy of the project (political, social, economic, scientific, and connections to traditional knowledge)

CAESAR achieved an improved linkage of science to society. Awareness of local problems and possibilities for their solution through integrated approaches (with international contribution) was increased. Partnerships were consolidated. Local collaborating institutions were made familiar with the IWRM concept.

Recommendations arising from the experience of having (or not) impact on discourse and action outside science to be taken into account for future research (e.g. FP7)

Provision of funding to improve take-up actions and the identification of concrete project results – extend project funding to enable the evaluation of project communication and impact and to give innovation related activities a more flexible character.

Responses to the specific questions

1. What has been communicated (and how) to diverse stakeholders about integrated water resources management and associated concepts integrating knowledge in interdisciplinary ways?

The necessity of scientifically based integrated approaches for a better understanding of the complex relation and interdependencies between natural landscape elements, the complex natural systems and their anthropogenic transformation was principally communicated to stakeholders. On various occasions (national, international conferences, workshops, scientific and public discussions, website,

educational activities etc.) the overall interdisciplinary approach of the CAESAR-project was demonstrated.

Project results based on surveys among local population, applied GIS-data, thematic maps etc. Field work took place in strong cooperation with the local population, giving the possibility of exchange of knowledge. Contacts to local leaders were best used for communication. Within guide-supported interviews, respective information was gained in field work but as well spread. Local workshops for communal participation in the transformation of city quarters (TTIB's), local governmental institutions (Poder Popular) and institutions from regional and city planning (Instituto de Planificación Física - IPF, Grupo para el Desarrollo Integral de la Capital – GDIC; Consejo de Cuenca) were in the focus of information dissemination. E.g. the projects GIS and databases were handed over to them to support decision making.

2. How have the ideas, skills and tools developed through the project enhanced the development or implementation of locally consistent IWRM?

The projects GIS and databases were handed over to them to support decision making (see 1.), to improve training and contribute to the application of project results. As a local but concrete example of IWRM a former quarry in the centre of an highly contaminated river (Río Quibú) was chosen to demonstrate the integrative approach within a take-up action, through concrete actions for the transformation of the quarry, which served for many years as an illegal garbage dump (Environmental Park Río Quibú).

Further the project's GIS was integrated in the decision data base of the Council of drainage basins (Consejo de Cuencas), responsible for the integrated management of drainage basins in the province Ciudad de La Habana.

3. Has your project been able to make connections between traditional and culturally embedded knowledge and technological research findings and if so, which?

There has been no really connection between traditional knowledge and technological research findings.

Local embedded cultural knowledge will be strongly connected to the research findings, as the above mentioned Environmental Park Río Quibú (see 2.) aims as well at the relationship of science to society, or rather the incorporation of cultural events in the project work of the park. Local installations may therefore be used for cultural events but as well for environmental education of the local community.

4. Have such ideas been taken up by managers, policy makers, educators? If so, please explain.

As mentioned above, project results (GIS, databases etc.) were given to governmental planning institutions (see 1. and 2.). A multimedia documentation on project results, with an additional focus on environmental problems and local solutions, was elaborated and will be given to schools and other educational institutions to contribute to improvement of information material and work in environmental education. As participants of the research were universities a huge amount of diploma, master- and doctoral thesis were realised. The Faculty of Geography of the University of Havana has won the national prize for the best applied environmental project from the Ministry of Higher Education. Managers, policy makers, educators and local leaders (and though them as well the civil society) have taken up the ideas of IWRM as communicated in the CAESAR-project.

5. Has the project contributed to capacity building legacy? If so, how?

Through the intensive transfer of knowledge to the respective institutions and local collaborators (see above) the project contributed to personal capacity building. The catalogue of project recommendations included as well recommendations for institutional capacity building. Their application is an issue of future activities.

6. Has the project resulted in longer-term institutional cooperation?

The project has led to intensification of earlier institutional cooperation. The consortium continues work on the mentioned take-up action (Environmental Park Río Quibú). Quite a problem is that there is a lack of funds related directly to the implementation of project results after funding from the FP for the project has finished (no possibility for project extension).

Proposals for further activities will be elaborated between members of the CAESAR-consortium and local collaborating partners.

7. What do you think is the most enduring legacy of the project (political, social, economic, scientific, connections to traditional knowledge)?

CAESAR achieved a stronger linkage of science to society. Awareness of local problems and possibilities for their solution through integrated approaches (with international contribution) was increased. Partnerships were consolidated. Local collaborating institutions were made familiar with the IWRM concept.

8. Do you have any specific local, 'grass-root' experience that would be valuable as case material for the WWF4 discussions?

Experience was gained within the (now 2 year long) work on the Environmental Park Río Quibú. This Park is located at Callejón de Andrade, which is a settlement within the City of Havana, characterized by very low living conditions (urban slums, partly lacking access to drinking water, health risks, informal economic activities, nearby low intensity-agriculture, bad environmental situations etc.). It's central part is built at the banks of the highly contaminated Quibú river. The local population is some 4000 people. Special to Callejón de Andrade is, that it is a complete informal but state-tolerated (e.g. social/medical infrastructure) settlement. A great part of the supplied drinking water is actually used for irrigation in the nearby agricultural areas. First contacts were installed to local leaders during CAESAR field work. They planted their idea for the conversion of the quarry into an environmental park, aiming to environmental education and water sanitation of the Quibú river. The realization of work until now was possible because of strong contacts to local decision makers from politics and society (see list of local collaborators). With intensive public participation, conversion of the quarry became concrete. The territory for the mentioned park was delimited, a fence was set up, first installations like an educational "*aula ecológica*" were built and afforestation (some 150 seedlings) to stabilise the slopes began.

Special experience valuable for WWF4 discussion therefore exists in the areas of water supply and hygienic issues of settlements, contribution to guarantee the access to safe drinking water, water management in the conflict area of environment and security of food.

9. Would you like to recommend any specific type of approach arising from the experience of having (or not) impact on discourse and action outside science to be taken into account for future research (e.g. FP7)?

It is necessary to install or improve possible funding for take-up actions for application of concrete project results (make a certain extension of project funding possible after a new evaluation of project results, to give innovation related activities a more flexible character).

