



Water-Wiki: An opportunity for UN-Water

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Executive Summary

The UNDP-led Waterwiki.net was initiated some four years ago geographically covering essentially the ECE region and focussing primarily, although not exclusively, on water governance issues. While UNDP is facilitating development and maintenance of waterwiki.net, several other members of UN-Water are already actively supporting the venture.

The wiki concept allows registered users to input both their own information and to edit existing information with the potential of involving more members of the water community and of vastly increasing the body of knowledge available to all users of the internet.

Over the past year waterwiki.net has been expanded geographically to world-wide coverage and in themes to cover all major (fresh-) water issues. There is now the opportunity for waterwiki.net to be officially endorsed by UN-Water as a complementary, interactive web resource to existing sites, thus becoming an initiative that would involve all members of UN-Water and all Partner Organizations, bringing additional cohesion to the system.

The comparative advantages of websites and wikis in general are analyzed. The particular comparison of the UN-Water website with waterwiki.net demonstrates that they are not in competition with each other, but, by contrast, are naturally complementary. A variety of other websites and wikis are shown also to be potentially complementary to waterwiki.net.

An important concern of many members of UN-Water is that only information of the highest quality be included in the wiki and that the UN be legally guarded against any incorrect or defamatory information that users might insert into the wiki. A clear disclaimer absolving the UN should be sufficient to meet legal concerns and high quality input can be ensured by strict oversight on who is accepted as a registered user and by detailed checking for any incorrect, embarrassing or defamatory information included.

Options for consideration of UN-Water are made and recommendations on how best to take up this opportunity are given.

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1. The essentials of websites and wikis

Website: A collection of related web pages, images, videos or other digital assets that are addressed with a common domain name or IP address in an Internet Protocol-based network. A website is hosted on at least one web server, accessible via a network such as the Internet or a private local network. *The owner of a website has complete control over the content of the website.*

Wiki: A collaborative Website comprises the perpetual collective work of many authors. Similar to a blog in structure and logic, *a wiki allows registered users to input information and to edit, delete or modify content that has been placed on the Website using a browser interface, including the work of previous authors.*

More comprehensive definitions are found in Annex 1.

General comparison of classic websites and wikis. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) 1.

<p>Comparative strengths of wikis in general</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decentralized contributions & content responsibility (democratic + self-responsibility + peer control) • Limited format or structure prescribed (<i>let it grow !</i>) • “Tags” and hyperlinks as backbone (instead of folders & hierarchy) • Allow/promote any knowledge in any format: files, pictures, etc. • But restrain opinions / viewpoints (use other fora for that) • Coaching & support, rather than supervision and control • More dynamic and adaptable to changes and new demands 	<p>Opportunities for wiki approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a community-wide knowledge hub and a ‘one-stop-shop’ through information contained via links • Provides broad interaction and outreach, allowing anyone to participate and upload their own information (once their registration as a user has been accepted) • Encourages engagement and participation of all • Promotes and facilitates collaborative approaches on content creation, across organizational and geographic limits • The fact that editing happens in real-time can accelerate publication and updating of content • No limits or constraints in number or logistical organization of contributors or drafting groups on a given article/page
<p>Comparative weaknesses of wikis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May lack the benefits of a formal structure • May become unbalanced if a majority of users with particular interests dominate • If the wiki becomes very popular, with concomitant very heavy usage, there may be logistical challenges in checking the acceptance of edits • It may be that wiki usage is more heavily weighted to younger users (this may be seen either as a strength or a weakness) 	<p>Threats/risks when using wikis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major risk in deciding who to approve as user; seemingly creditable names could disrupt the system if verification of eligibility or suitability are not rigorously controlled • Balance between different themes or regions may be skewed (according to the particular interests of users) • The system might become out of control if its popularity becomes overwhelming – funding level for control of the system very difficult to ascertain

2. The development of the UNDP waterwiki.net

Aug 2005: Started as a bottom-up venture with zero budget (but 100% commitment + 2 interns)

Aug 2005 – Mar 2006 (1/2 year):

- From 0 to 600 visitor/day
- Some 200 pages (incl. 32 “country-pages”, 25 projects, 50 reports, 40 practitioners, ...)

Sept 2008:

- ~ 2,000 pages + 850 uploaded files (including 101 projects, 187 reports, 192 users, 97 thematic articles, 39 experience write-ups / case-studies, 127 organizations and networks, 213 glossary terms ...) Average usage: 700-900 genuine visitors / week (approx. 2,500 page-views / week)

Dec 2009:

- 6,195 pages + 2,219 uploaded files (including 523 projects, 270 publications, 334 users, 122 thematic articles, 114 experience write-ups / case studies, 192 organizations and networks (including **all** UN-Water members and partners), 529 glossary terms, ~100 external web resources).
- Average usage: 3,500 genuine visitors / week (approx. 7,500 page-views / week).

Partners of waterwiki.net include (mid 2009):

- UNDP (initiator and main supporter to date)
- UNECE (since early 2008)
- UNESCO, WHO, WWAP and UN-Water Country-level Task Force (since August 2008)

As of June 2009 there were ~300 registered users of waterwiki.net (~220 of whom were employees of UNDP and ~17 were from other UN agencies; about 50% of registered users had not actively contributed information to or had edited existing information; it is only a few registered users who are very active contributors). The number of registered users is increasing at ~20 per month.

Excellent feedback has been received from the user community with comments including:

- WaterWiki has greatly improved access to information and knowledge on water in the region (“*Our own little Britannica*“)
- Used by practitioners and experts as an information-base, a learning resource, and “to stay connected to other practitioners”
- People like the “look and feel” of WaterWiki
- High flexibility in terms of content, structure, presentation, continued change and development
- An easy-to-use platform, broad enough to cover all relevant information sources, yet focused and specific enough to remain relevant, selective, “to-the-point” and of real practical use

3. Comparison of the UN-Water website with the waterwiki.net

SWOT 2.

<p>Comparative strengths of waterwiki.net</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the main UNDP's <i>Knowledge exchange and on-line collaboration platform</i> for water practitioners • It provides a complementary alternative to official UN / project sites • While the UN-Water website provides information which is completely under UN control, waterwiki.net provides an alternative and continuously growing knowledge base that improves with each individual user-contribution • It allows sharing and discussing of on the ground knowledge (successes, failures, lessons) • It is owned by the cross-agency community • While it is given general support by UNDP, which polices the registration process and monitors the inputs and edits, it allows freedom to users to determine their own inputs • It allows inclusion of information possibly different from that provided by the UN-Water website and thus extends the types of information and knowledge • In a continual state of expansion – new themes and new regional focuses, new and attractive functionalities and new search facilities being added • Provides excellent instructions to users and would-be users on how to access and contribute to the system • While the entire content is visible to anyone, only registered & logged-in users can create new or edit existing pages / articles, upload files, insert links, pictures, videos, rate or discuss contributions • Provides quality control through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Self-responsibility</i>: Each contributor is attributed to his/her contributions ○ <i>Peer-control</i>: users mutually monitor, comment and directly edit each others contributions ○ <i>Facilitation</i>: “Knowledge farmers” assist users, guide or selectively complement contributions, to maximize usability/benefit ○ <i>Red-button</i>: If necessary, users can be blocked and every change ever made be undone • Very strong system of cross linkages within the wiki and between the wiki and other websites 	<p>Opportunities for waterwiki.net</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current thematic focus could be opened up to all aspects of water use and challenges and coverage could be extended to become global • Could bring great credit to UN-Water by providing a manageable mechanism to encourage individuals and organizations world-wide to contribute to water knowledge • The existing already very good system, with some further minor developments, could be extended to provide a really excellent reference and search system on themes, issues and regional concerns • Could be linked into (“mashed-up” with) other knowledge transfer systems such as “LinkedIn”, external Wikis or other UN-Water web-tools, to provide information on individuals • Dynamic cross-links with the most relevant websites on water issues, combined with the specific functions of a Wiki, could make it a “one-stop-shop” to explore and contribute to UN-relevant knowledge on water issues • With some reasonable, targeted financial input for another round of development (mostly IT/search and content-structure), the current system could reach an unprecedented level of institutional and content-related comprehensiveness, relevance and professionalism as compared to other existing interactive platforms and web-tools
<p>Comparative weaknesses of waterwiki.net</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the inputs are largely controlled by registered users, it may become biased towards particular themes or regional interests • As with so many new technologies, younger individuals may be more attracted to the system than older individuals (can be either a weakness or a strength, depending on one's viewpoint) • Before the platform will reach “the critical mass” of registered users, its content creation and update will depend, as with conventional websites, on a core group of contributors (eg a designated web-responsible individual for each agency) 	<p>Threats/risks for waterwiki.net</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risks in difficulty of judging the credibility of potential users (offset by the ability to re-edit inputs through preservation of the history of the editing process and by the possibility of eliminating users who misuse the system) • Risks of UN-Water being held responsible for misleading or erroneous information (but this may be overcome by insertion of disclaimer clauses) • Risks of not being able to forecast the extent to which the system will become popular and therefore difficulty in forecasting funding needs to monitor the system • Risk of lacking financial input for further developments (IT, cross-links) that would be the basis to lift WaterWiki.net up to the professional level it deserves

4. A selection of water websites and water wikis and their possible complementarity with waterwiki.net

A listing of selected websites and wikis is given in Table 1 in which a simple differentiation is made between sites primarily (or only) websites and those which are primarily (or only) wikis, or which act as both websites and wikis. Differentiation is also made between general sites and those specific to a region or to a topic. This listing does not attempt to be comprehensive, but rather illustrative of the major water sites now accessible. A complete listing of all websites of the 26 UN-Water members and of the 17 Partner Organizations is found in Annex 2.

Also within Annex 2 each site is described in terms of scope, objectives, target audience, issues and particular roles of niches.

All of these websites and wikis can be seen as complementary to waterwiki.net; cross links to these websites and wikis, or to particular sections of websites and wikis could be made within waterwiki.net.

Table 1

Major categories	Sites	Website	Wiki	Web address
	UNWater	X		www.unwater.org
	UNDP Water Wiki	X	X	www.waterwiki.net
General water sites				
	GEF IW:LEARN	X	X	www.iwlearn.net
	Wikia	X	X	http://water.wikia.com/wiki/Main_Page
	Aquapedia		X	http://wikis.uit.tufts.edu/confluence/display/aquapedia/About
	AquaKnow		X	www.aquaknow.net/
	WaterSISWEB		X	www.sisweb.org/water/faq-en.php
	The Water Channel		X	www.thewaterchannel.tv/
	CapNet	X		www.cap-net.org/
	Global Water Partnership	X		www.gwpforum.org
	GWP Toolbox	X		www.gwptoolbox.org
Specialist				
	GEMS "Open Water"		X	www.ungiwg.org/openwater/
	Atlas of International Freshwater Agreements	X		www.transboundarywaters.orst.edu/publications/atlas/
Water Supply + Sanitation				
	Akvo.org	X	X	www.akvo.org/wiki/index.php/
	World Bank's WSS Wikipedia project	X	X	World Bank's WSS Wikipedia project
	WELL	X		www.lboro.ac.uk/well/
Regional: Europe				
	EU Water Facility	X		http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/regional-cooperation/water/index_en.htm
	EU Water Initiative	X	X	www.euwi.net/
	European Water Partnership	X		www.ewp.eu/
	European Water News	X		http://vedm.net/click2?!=7FTcO&m=hvsR&s=Y0OFt20
Regional: Central Asia				
	CAWaterInfo	X		www.cawater-info.net/
Regional Central America				
	CARA network	X		www.caragua.org/
Regional: USA				
	The Water Wiki (USA)	X	X	http://waterwiki.wik.is/
	Water Wiki (SE USA)	X	X	http://sogweb.sog.unc.edu/Water/index.php/Main_Page
	Great Lakes Wiki	X	X	http://www.greatlakeswiki.org/index.php/Main_Page
Activist				
	International Rivers	X		www.internationalrivers.org/
Coastal sites				
	Coastal Portal Wiki	X	X	www.coastalwiki.org/coastalwiki/Main_Page
	Coast Web	X		www.coastweb.info/

5. A summary of the opportunities and the risks in UN-Water adopting waterwiki.net

- Waterwiki.net is far more advanced and more usable than any of the other water wikis listed in section 5, above; most other water wikis are still in their infancy;
- Waterwiki.net does not compete with the UN-Water website – rather the waterwiki.net and the UN-Water website complement each other – they have different functions; waterwiki.net can make very useful links to the UN-Water website.
- Waterwiki.net does not compete with any of the other websites or wikis mentioned – cross references can be made to these sites – they can be made to complement each other;
- There is tremendous potential for developing the current (mainly UNDP-led) wiki into a UN-Water wiki;
 - several key members of the UN-Water family are already actively on board;
 - the themes can be broadened to include all water issues and challenges;
 - regional coverage can be expanded to become a truly global system;
 - acceptance of the wiki as a UN system-wide activity would help to consolidate UN member organizations and entities as a single system;
 - the inclusion of UN partner organizations would make the process all the more effective.
- The transition of the current to a “pan-UN WaterWiki” would not only logarithmically increase scope, comprehensiveness and the potential value for users, but through the consequent increase of its relevance, visibility and attractiveness as a key web-resource and knowledge hub, would, in return, greatly multiply visitor traffic, with the key effects of increasing the attractiveness for users to become active contributors (which again makes the Wiki itself grow and gain in value).
- The significant efforts and inputs made by the (mainly UNDP- and UNESCO-financed) WaterWiki.net team over the past four years provide an excellent basis for UN-Water to build on for the next steps towards professionalization and expansion, which will require comparatively small additional funding.
- The risks involved – primarily those concerned with quality of information – can be managed by ensuring a strict policy of accrediting only users with good credentials and by monitoring inputs and edits to ensure high quality of wiki content. These risks are minor in comparison to the gains to be made in going ahead to make the Waterwiki.net a UN-Water activity.

6. Options for going forward

Five possible scenarios were envisaged:

1. **“Disengagement”**: No relationship between WaterWiki.net and UN-WATER at all; in this case, presumably, UNDP would continue its development of waterwiki.net with the support and inclusion of those agencies wishing to be involved but without official endorsement of UN Water;
2. **“Engagement without legal connection”**: Active engagement of UN-Water on WaterWiki.net, promoting its use as an independent Wiki-platform in the UN water community; in this case UN Water would endorse waterwiki.net but its development would still rest primarily with UNDP or another entity;
3. **“Responsibility / support / ownership by UN Water”**: UN Water assuming responsibility / ownership of WaterWiki.net, but drawing on inputs from partner organizations;
4. **“Joint responsibility / support / ownership by UN Water and its partner organizations”**: UN-Water and partner organizations having joint responsibility / ownership of WaterWiki.net.
5. **“Expanded ownership”**: Expansion of institutional ownership, allowing engagement of non-UN-Water stakeholders as co-supporting or co-owning partners of WaterWiki.net.

After the first round of consultations in July 2009 (details of which are given in Annex 3), no organization chose option 1, indicating that there is a consensus that the proposal that UN Water should develop a WaterWiki be pursued.

A majority of UN Water members chose option 2 indicating a guarded approach.

A majority of partner organizations chose option 3 or 4.

Several mentioned that an incremental approach should be adopted – start off with option 2 or 3 and progress towards a more all-inclusive state once the benefits have been proven.

7. Recommendations

1. Accept option 2 “*Engagement without legal connection*”: Active engagement of UN-Water on WaterWiki.net, supporting its further development and promoting its use as an independent Wiki-platform in the UN water community; in this case UN Water would endorse waterwiki.net but its development and maintenance would rest with a single UN entity. This would imply the most modest starting level; it would keep control and ownership within UN-Water, but all partner organizations would be encouraged to participate in the wiki development.
2. Select a UN-Water member to take prime responsibility for wiki development and maintenance; the most likely candidate would be UNDP, but this should be discussed and endorsed by UN-Water. Also identify a UN-Water Partner to support the process.
3. Initiate a 2-year trial period after which there should be an evaluation of progress made and value of the wiki approach before a decision is made on how best to proceed further.
4. Insist on high quality information being entered into the wiki; this would imply:
 - Strict criteria for the registration of ‘users’ of the wiki, ie those individuals who would be allowed to make inputs to the wiki and/or would be allowed to edit existing information on the wiki.
 - Constant oversight of information on the wiki to ensure accuracy and to identify possible defamatory statements; (the possibility of taking away user privileges could be invoked if necessary)
5. Make sure that legal implications regarding UN-Water endorsement of the wiki are addressed (would a disclaimer appearing on the front page of the wiki be sufficient? This question could be asked of the legal section of one of the UN entities).
6. The current waterwiki.net should be expanded to include all (fresh-) water issues and all regions and key water basins of the world.
7. An overall concept should be developed and a listing of issues, regions, countries, river basins, questions of governance, etc should be provided to form a framework to give structure to inputs and to allow efficient searching by the public; annex 4 suggests a possible framework and also suggests information to be included on a redesigned front page of the wiki.
8. All members of UN-Water and all Partner organizations should be encouraged to contribute to the content of the wiki; this should particularly involve other UN-Water initiatives which are system-wide (ie WWAP, UNW-DPC and UNW-DAPC) and initiatives which involve more than one UN entity (ie JMP and GLASS) to promote coherence between these initiatives.
9. Attention should be paid to linkages with other water wikis being developed within the UN system and in Partner organizations (particularly to the wiki being developed by IWA) – this to ensure complementarity between systems.
10. Funding: as a water wiki with UN-Water endorsement, core funding should be made available from the UN-Water budget; individual UN-Water members and Partner organizations would contribute ‘in kind’ support when providing inputs to the wiki. It is essential that funding be adequate to allow high quality oversight of wiki development and maintenance. A suggested amount of \$150,000 should be allocated as core funding for the first year of operation (as detailed in Annex 5).

Annex 1 Definition of terms

A **website** is a collection of related web pages, images, videos or other digital assets that are addressed with a common domain name or IP address in an Internet Protocol-based network. A website is hosted on at least one web server, accessible via a network such as the Internet or a private local network.

A web page is a document, typically written in plain text interspersed with formatting instructions of Hypertext Markup Language (HTML, XHTML). A web page may incorporate elements from other websites with suitable markup anchors.

Web pages are accessed and transported with the Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP), which may optimally employ encryption (HTTP Secure, HTTPS) to provide security and privacy for the user of the web page content. The user's application, often a web browser, renders the page content according to its HTML markup instructions onto a display terminal.

All publicly accessible websites collectively constitute the World Wide Web.

The pages of a website can usually be accessed from a simple Uniform Resource Locator (URL) called the homepage. The URLs of the pages organize them into a hierarchy, although hyperlinking between them conveys the reader's perceived site structure and guides the reader's navigation of the site.

Some websites require a subscription to access some or all of their content. Examples of subscription sites include many business sites, parts of many news sites, academic journal sites, gaming sites, message boards, web-based e-mail, services, social networking websites, and sites providing real-time stock market data.

Wiki: A collaborative Web site comprises the perpetual collective work of many authors. Similar to a blog in structure and logic, a wiki allows registered users to edit, delete or modify content that has been placed on the Website using a browser interface, including the work of previous authors. In contrast, a blog (short for Web log) typically authored by an individual, does not allow visitors to change the original posted material, only add comments to the original content.

Annex 2 A listing of selected water-websites and –wikis

General Water sites

UNWater	Scope	Website (see Table 2 for links to the 26 members of UN-Water and the 17 Partner Organizations)
	Objectives	Provide information on all 26 UN agencies and entities concerned with freshwater issues and on the concerns of 17 partner organizations
	Target audience	Everyone with interests in freshwater
	Issues	All issues
	Particular niche	General
	Comments	Well structured, very informative and easy to navigate

UNDP Water Wiki	Scope	Wiki
	Objectives	Provision of information primarily from UNDP, UNECE, UNESCO, WHO, FAO and WWAP; and the gathering of information from many other sources
	Target audience	Everyone with interests in freshwater; but primarily water professionals
	Issues	Main focus on Water and Sanitation, but expanding to other areas
	Particular niche	Started with focus on Europe and CIS countries, but now enlarging to cover many other regions
	Comments	See SWOT 2, above. Huge potential for expansion through more themes, issues and regional coverage

UNDP CapNet	Scope	Website
	Objectives	Cap-Net is an international network for capacity building in IWRM. It is made up of a partnership of autonomous international, regional and national institutions and networks committed to capacity building in the water community.
	Target audience	Everyone with interests in freshwater; but primarily water professionals
	Issues	All water issues but with focus on IWRM
	Particular niche	IWRM
	Comments	Very informative; excellent complement to waterwiki.net; provides excellent links to some 26 other key partners.

GEF IW:LEARN	Scope	Website and Wiki
	Objectives	Promotes experience sharing and learning among GEF international waters projects and the country officials, agencies and partners working on them.
	Target audience	Everyone with interests in freshwater; but primarily water professionals
	Issues	Transboundary international issues
	Particular niche	Global transboundary
	Comments	Very informative; could be supplementary to waterwiki.net

Wikia	Scope	Website and Wiki
	Objectives	Provide information on many water uses and issues
	Target audience	Broad
	Issues	Wide range
	Particular niche	No special niche
	Comments	As yet very under-developed and full of advertisements

Aquapedia	Scope	Wiki
	Objectives	The initial content of the AquaPedia consists of case studies drawn from the Tufts Fall University Seminar on Water and Diplomacy: Integration of Science, Engineering, and Negotiations
	Target audience	Academics; professionals; policy makers
	Issues	Somewhat restricted to those above
	Particular niche	Linking natural and social systems
	Comments	Potential for much further development

AquaKnow	Scope	Wiki
	Objectives	For collaboration and to inform stakeholders in the water community
	Target audience	Broad
	Issues	Set up to be broad but clear emphasis on WSS
	Particular niche	Focus on Africa
	Comments	Still in initial phase

Global Water Partnership	Scope	Website
	Objectives	To support the sustainable development and management of water resources at all levels.
	Target audience	Main audience: Network of GWP in 13 regions over the world
	Issues	All issues around IWRM
	Particular niche	Emphasis on IWRM
	Comments	New structure envisaged in 2010; could be linked to waterwiki.net

GWP ToolBox	Scope	Website
	Objectives	A free access source of knowledge on IWRM, repository of case studies and reference documents with external links on a broad range of IWRM tools
	Target audience	Academics; professionals; policy makers, NGOs
	Issues	Structured web site on IWRM tools
	Particular niche	GWP network and all interested in IWRM
	Comments	Potential for further development; could be linked to waterwiki.net

WaterSISWEB	Scope	Wiki
	Objectives	A <u>S</u> cientific <u>I</u> nformation <u>S</u> yndication <u>W</u> EBsite dedicated to sharing information on water resources
	Target audience	Scientists, researchers, students and industry professionals
	Issues	Very broad based
	Particular niche	Helping to make group decisions
	Comments	Somewhat difficult to navigate

The Water Channel	Scope	Wiki
	Objectives	To bring together video contributions on many aspects of water
	Target audience	All
	Issues	All
	Particular niche	Only videos and film materials
	Comments	Very specific but very useful as the inputs are grouped into convenient categories; would provide a very useful complement to waterwiki.net

Specialist sites

GEMS "Open Water"	Scope	Wiki
	Objectives	A UNEP initiative providing a platform for water quality scientists, researchers and practitioners to discuss analytical methods which are "tried, but maybe not true"
	Target audience	Scientists
	Issues	Water quality
	Particular niche	Restricted to above
	Comments	In its infancy

Atlas of International Freshwater Agreements	Scope	Website
	Objectives	Provides a historical overview of international river basin management' with detailed listing of agreements
	Target audience	All
	Issues	All issues, but particularly legal
	Particular niche	International basins
	Comments	Excellent source of information well laid out and easy to navigate

Primarily Water Supply and Sanitation sites

Akvo.org	Scope	Website and Wiki
	Objectives	To improve water and sanitation through knowledge exchange and smart and affordable technical solutions
	Target audience	All interested in WSS
	Issues	Practical solutions to WSS
	Particular niche	As above
	Comments	Simple layout and probably very effective; complementary to waterwiki.net

World Bank's WSS Wikipedia project	Scope	Website and Wiki
	Objectives	To allow contributions to knowledge for users of WSS information and technology
	Target audience	All those with interests in WSS
	Issues	Primarily WSS but being broadened to other issues eg energy
	Particular niche	Initially Latin America but being broadened to near global perspective
	Comments	Uses Wikipedia technology; could be made easier to navigate

WELL	Scope	Website
	Objectives	Provision of information on water, sanitation and environmental health
	Target audience	All those interested
	Issues	WSS
	Particular niche	As above
	Comments	Site last updated in April 2007.....

European sites

EU Water Facility	Scope	Website
	Objectives	Explain the funding of the ACP (Africa, Caribbean, Pacific) – EU Water Facility
	Target audience	All those interested in funding specific projects
	Issues	Focus on health and development issues
	Particular niche	Developing world
	Comments	Informative and concise

EU Water Initiative	Scope	Website and Wiki
	Objectives	An innovative attempt to focus on water, to protect our environment and improve lives and livelihoods
	Target audience	Professionals, policy makers and practitioners in Africa
	Issues	Health and environment
	Particular niche	Africa
	Comments	Simple, restricted in scope and quite effective

European Water Partnership	Scope	Website
	Objectives	Dissemination of information on European water issues
	Target audience	All those concerned
	Issues	All issues
	Particular niche	Provision of a vision for 2030
	Comments	In its infancy; much potential in a restricted geographical area

European Water News	Scope	Website
	Objectives	News articles mainly on European issues, but some world-wide
	Target audience	All those interested
	Issues	Wide ranging
	Particular niche	No particular niche
	Comments	The latest news (as of 28 Sept 09) is dated December 2008...

Central Asian Region

CAWaterinfo	Scope	Website supported by Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
	Objectives	Provide links to many partner organizations particularly those within the region; provide information and bibliographic databases
	Target audience	All players in the Central Asian region
	Issues	All issues pertaining to sustainable resources development
	Particular niche	All aspects of water and environmental management
	Comments	Excellent gateway to water information within the region

Central America Region

CARA network	Scope	Website
	Objectives	A water resource training network focusing on building local capacity to improve the management and protection of Central American water resources.
	Target audience	Local capacity is built through high calibre M.Sc. programs, short courses, workshops, field practicums and applied research projects at each of the member universities.
	Issues	All issues pertaining to sustainable resources development
	Particular niche	Promotes a philosophy of partnerships and collaborations of water resource organizations from universities, governments, the private sector, non governmental organizations and international funding agencies.
	Comments	Could provide complementary information to waterwiki

USA sites

The Water Wiki (USA)	Scope	Website and Wiki
	Objectives	To inform the Sustainable Water Resources Roundtable discussions
	Target audience	Decision-makers at all levels of government within USA
	Issues	All issues pertaining to sustainable resources development
	Particular niche	USA
	Comments	Good for getting a broad overview of the important players

Water Wiki (SE USA)	Scope	Website and Wiki
	Objectives	To gather opinions on how water should be managed in SE USA
	Target audience	All decision makers as well as general public
	Issues	All issues related to water in that region
	Particular niche	Brings together many studies and plans as well as public opinion
	Comments	Articles listed seem very topical and timely

Great Lakes Wiki	Scope	Website and Wiki
	Objectives	To encourage students to learn and participate by writing articles
	Target audience	Students
	Issues	All those concerning the Great Lakes drainage basin
	Particular niche	Education tool
	Comments	Simple objective; restricted geographical region; well described

“Activist”

International Rivers	Scope	Website
	Objectives	Disseminate knowledge on how to be an anti-dams activist
	Target audience	Environmental activists
	Issues	Primarily dams
	Particular niche	As above
	Comments	Controversial



























Coastal sites (peripheral to freshwater concerns)

Coastal Portal Wiki	Scope	Website and Wiki
	Objectives	To build an encyclopaedia on coastal issues
	Target audience	All interested
	Issues	Coasts and coastal dynamics
	Particular niche	As above
	Comments	Peripheral to freshwater concerns


Coast Web	Scope	Website
	Objectives	Primarily news articles on coastal issues
	Target audience	All interested
	Issues	Very broad
	Particular niche	As above
	Comments	Peripheral to freshwater concerns

Table 2

UN-Water members

 CBD Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity	 FAO Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	 IAEA International Atomic Energy Agency
 IFAD International Fund For Agricultural Development <small>Enabling poor rural people to overcome poverty</small>	 UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund	 UNCTAD United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
 UNCCD Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification	 UN DESA United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs	 UNDP United Nations Development Programme
 UN ECA United Nations Economic Commission for Africa	 UN ECE United Nations Economic Commission for Europe	 UN ECLAC United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
 UN ESCAP United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	 UN ESCWA United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia	 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
 UNEP United Nations Environment Programme	 UNFCCC Secretariat of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	 UN-Habitat United Nations Human Settlements Programme
 UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	 UNIDO United Nations Industrial Development Organization	 UNISDR United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
 UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY	 The World Bank	 World Health Organization
 WMO World Meteorological Organization	 UNWTO World Tourism Organization	

UN-Water Partner Organizations

 <p>AquaFed THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PRIVATE WATER OPERATORS</p>	 <p>THE GLOBAL COMPACT</p>	 <p>Global Water Partnership</p>
 <p>IAH International Association of Hydrogeologists</p>	 <p>IAHS International Association of Hydrological Sciences</p>	 <p>ICID International Commission on Irrigation & Drainage</p>
 <p>IWA International Water Association</p>	 <p>IWMI International Water Management Institute</p>	 <p>PSI Public Services International</p>
 <p>Ramsar Convention on Wetlands</p>	 <p>SIWI Stockholm International Water Institute</p>	 <p>UNSGAB United Nations Secretary General's Advisory Board on Water & Sanitation</p>
 <p>WSSCC Water Supply & Sanitation Collaborative Council</p>	 <p>World Business Council for Sustainable Development</p>	 <p>IUCN The World Conservation Union</p>
 <p>World Water Council</p>	 <p>WWF World Wide Fund for Nature</p>	

Annex 3 Progress report to UN Water 16 August 2009

It is a complex task to survey many organizations on the broad range of issues encompassed under the 'WaterWiki' umbrella.

The strategy adopted, therefore, was to conduct a relatively simple initial survey with two objectives:

- To give all organizations the opportunity to participate in the discussions and
- To obtain an initial reaction on the direction in which we might, collectively, be headed.

This initial survey will be followed up after the Stockholm Water Week by more in-depth discussion leading to a final report by the end of November 2009.

An Advisory Group has been formed of those who have expressed the desire to be centrally involved in the discussions; this group may be expanded in the weeks ahead. The group now includes 12 members of UN Water and 4 members of partner organizations. Others, not wishing to be on the core group, may wish to be kept informed of progress by copy of major communications.

In the initial survey respondents were invited to choose between the suggested options and to elaborate in more detail if they wished.

Five possible scenarios were envisaged:

6. **“Disengagement”**: No relationship between WaterWiki.net and UN-WATER at all; in this case, presumably, UNDP would continue its development of waterwiki.net with the support and inclusion of those agencies wishing to be involved but without official endorsement of UN Water;
7. **“Engagement without legal connection”**: Active engagement of UN-Water on WaterWiki.net, promoting its use as an independent Wiki-platform in the UN water community; in this case UN Water would endorse waterwiki.net but its development would still rest primarily with UNDP or another entity;
8. **“Responsibility / support / ownership by UN Water”**: UN Water assuming responsibility / ownership of WaterWiki.net, but drawing on inputs from partner organizations;
9. **“Joint responsibility / support / ownership by UN Water and its partner organizations”**: UN Water and partner organizations having joint responsibility / ownership of WaterWiki.net.
10. **“Expanded ownership”**: Expansion of institutional ownership, allowing engagement of non-UN-Water stakeholders as co-supporting or co-owning partners of WaterWiki.net.

Summary of responses to the initial survey conducted 27 July to 8 August 2009

30 members of UN Water were canvassed in the survey; 11 expressed opinions.

19 partner organizations were canvassed; 11 expressed opinions.

Results:

A summary of results is presented in Table 1.

Opinions varied quite widely. Three respondents were reluctant to select one of the five suggested options before better justification for UN Water being involved in a WaterWiki and before considerably more discussion has taken place on:

- Financial and resource implications for the further development and maintenance of WaterWiki.net,
- Reorganizing of the existing wiki to make it function better and make it even more user-friendly,
- Assurance of accuracy and balance of information presented,
- Addressing the legal issues surrounding ownership and responsibility.

No organization chose option 1, indicating that there is a consensus that the proposal that UN Water should develop a WaterWiki be pursued.

A majority of UN Water members chose option 2 indicating a guarded approach.

A majority of partner organizations chose option 3 or 4.

Several mentioned that an incremental approach should be adopted – start off with option 2 or 3 and progress towards a more all-inclusive state once the benefits have been proven.

UN Water members		Partner organizations	
	Preferred option		Preferred option
FAO	No choice made	IWA	No choice made
UNDP	4	ICID	3
UNESCO	2 or 3 perhaps later going higher	GWP	3
WHO	2	IAHS	3
UNHabitat	4	Aquafed	3 perhaps evolving to 4 or 5
UN Zaragoza	2	IWMI	2 followed by 4
UNCBD	No choice made	SIWI	4
WWAP	2	WWF	3 or 4 ?
WMO	2	WWC	4 progressing to 5
IAEA	2	UNSGAB	4 (personal opinion)
UN ISDR	3 or 4	WSSCC	3

Table 1: Simple breakdown of responses received so far

After further discussion on all issues, individuals may well wish to change their preferred option and those who have not yet stated their preference may wish to do so. However, noting that the great majority of respondents chose options 2, 3 or 4, we might usefully focus our attention on these three options. To help further discussion we might consider including the following comments and suggestions made by some of the respondents:

- There are very many water websites and several developing waterwikis and there is a need to bring them together in an organized way and to provide a ‘one point’ entry into the water world – UN Water is probably in the best position to provide this on behalf of the wider water community;
- The mandate of a waterwiki should be broad not only to cover water resource systems but also to include management and governance systems;
- We should carefully consider the implications of the word ‘ownership’; it may be better to adopt the word ‘branding’ – thus a waterwiki might have a UN Water ‘branding’ rather than a UN Water ‘ownership’;
- If it is decided that there should be a waterwiki set up under UN Water, then one organization should be tasked with much of the administrative tasks involved – the most obvious candidate is UNDP.

The intention is that these results provide the basis for further discussion during the WaterWiki agenda item in the UN Water meeting on 16th August; to be followed by more intensive one-on-one or small group discussions during the Water Week.

During September – November there will be a series of discussions primarily by email but with the option of telephone conference calls, if needed, involving primarily those on the Advisory Group. A final report synthesising all points of view and making recommendations on the future of a UN Water wiki should be available by end of November.

Gordon Young 16 August 2009

Annex 4 Suggestions for content of the waterwiki.net Front Page and elaboration of themes and issues to be included

Suggested items for inclusion on the Front Page of the wiki:

- UN-Water branding: a wiki provided by the members of UN-Water and their partner organizations
- Links to UN-Water website to be used as complementary to the wiki
- Statement of purpose of the wiki
- How to become a registered user of the wiki (will lead into the technicalities of how to provide input and how to edit information already existing on the wiki)
- List of major themes through which searches for information may be made (sub themes probably to be listed on the second page):
 1. Major water issues
 2. The status of the resource
 3. Issues of governance
 - Note: Major initial inputs of information on items 1,2 and 3 to be provided by members of UN-Water and partner organizations
 4. Geographical regions
 5. Countries
 6. International river basins and aquifers
- Possible addition of:
 7. Who's who in the world of water (perhaps through use of LinkedIn)
- Disclaimer that while the wiki is provided by and maintained by UN-Water, the information provided is by registered users

Second page: The aim here is to provide a structure so that searches and inputs can be made in an ordered fashion; searches could be made on a single issue or on a combination of issues.

Major water issues	Status of the resource	Governance issues	Geographical regions	Countries	International river basins / aquifers
Human health - drinking water - sanitation - water-related diseases	General hydrology - variability in space and time	Political systems	Possible breakdown by UN regions: ECE, ECA etc	Listing of all countries	Listing of international river basins (by region)
Food - agriculture - livestock - aquaculture - rain-fed - irrigated	Surface waters	Economic systems			Listing of international aquifers (by region)
Industry	Groundwaters	Social issues			
Energy	Soil moisture	IWRM			
Ecology	Water quality	Rights to water			
Floods	Sediment transport	Public/private partnerships			
Droughts	Climate drivers	Corruption			
Pollution					
Virtual water					

Annex 5 Funding

Suggested level of funding for the first year of development and maintenance of waterwiki.net from the budget of UN-Water (\$US):

1	1 (junior) full-time person for maintenance, user admin & support, continuous content creation & update, targeted research, partner networking, communication and outreach, etc.	75,000
2	Professional website hosting & server maintenance services	5,000
3	1-2 IT specialists for development of waterwiki (2 – 5 months each)	70,000
	Total	150,000