1. Introduction
The strategy is meant to provide an overall framework for how we use information and communication within CPWF and help basins, projects and topic working groups plan and develop their own strategies. The Strategy is predicated on the assumption that better investments (resources, financing and thinking) in information and communication will improve impact and effectiveness – and reach- of CPWF’s research.

Communication and information in this strategy encompass a broad range of practices and approaches to bring about positive change. The topic includes: information management, strategic communication, public relations, development communication, advocacy, publishing and knowledge sharing. The strategy works internally and externally since it is recognized that effective internal communication in a research program is a pre-requisite to achieving and ensuring effective external communication.

This draft is meant to elicit feedback on the overall focus of information and communication in CPWF. In parallel with this draft strategy guidelines are being developed including for knowledge sharing, CPWF identity, revised publication guidelines and styles guides, etc. These will be provided in separate documents for comments and improvements.

2. The context
The Challenge Program on Water and Food aims to increase the resilience of social and ecological systems through better water management for food production (crops, fisheries and livestock). CPWF does this through an innovative research and development approach that brings together a broad range of scientists, development specialists, policy makers and communities to address the challenges of food security, poverty and water scarcity. CPWF is currently working in six river basins globally: Andes, Ganges, Limpopo, Mekong, Nile and Volta.

This information and communication strategy falls under the Knowledge Management (KM) team, which is part of the second of the CPWF’s two thrusts: Research and Innovation and Impact. CPWF places equal weight on each of the two thrusts to achieve development outcomes.

Knowledge management within CPWF is concerned with the production and management of knowledge to influence stakeholder attitudes and behaviors. In other words, Knowledge Management is an important mechanism by which the CPWF expects to achieve its research AND development goals. The CPWF KM team is comprised of three inter-linked areas (see below).

Some main aspects of CPWF that need to be taken into consideration when developing an information and communication strategy are:
CPWF is a time-bound program that will be integrated into the Consortium Research Program on Land, Water and the Ecosystems by 2013. A balance is needed between building a very (too?) strong brand and building opportunities for future synergies in an as yet unknown environment.

- Initial research strategy in Phase 1 cast its net widely and has results from 68 projects in 10 benchmark basins. Based on lessons from Phase 1, it was decided to focus on 6 river basins and establish basin programs in six river basins globally. We need to ensure that past knowledge is collected and made accessible for re-use AND that new knowledge is widely communicated.
- The CPWF uses Outcome Logic Models (OLMs) and impact pathways to ensure that its research is contributing to development change. Learning is pulled together at the basin and global level. Thus, communication plans and activities need to be linked and integrated to OLMs.
- Basin work is focused around strategically identified development challenges and is comprised of 4-5 integrated projects that are linked together. Each project works through an OLM that guides research. The situations in the basins are diverse and a one-size-fits-all approach to communication will not work and needs to be based on local context, conditions and needs. It is nevertheless important to learn from different approaches and to promote cross-project sharing. Basins are likely to produce a mix of local, regional, and global ‘public goods’—serving different audiences and intended outcomes.
- CPWF emphasizes five core principles: adaptive management, capacity building, gender and diversity, partnerships, interdisciplinary research, accountability. One could argue that open knowledge and access is a communication core principle.

A rapid information and communication assessment of staff, partners and others was carried out to inform this strategy. Some key issues are summarized below.

- **Internal communication:** Mechanisms for regularly sharing information across the program are just being developed or introduced. Each basin has begun to develop their own communication strategy and there are opportunities for learning between them.

- **CPWF branding and messaging:** CPWF has a relatively strong ‘brand’ but guidelines for positioning CPWF at different levels consistently are not clear. CPWF is in the process of defining its main messages to help better position and market the work it is doing.

- **Information Management:** A number of systems used in Phase 1 (like IDIS, U:drive and Blue docs) have not been carried over into Phase 2. In addition, there are only a few CGIAR-wide systems that CPWF contributes to or feeds into, e.g. CGMap for on-going projects in Africa, Easy MTP for medium-term plans, and activities of ICT-KM (Information Communications Technology-Knowledge Management). The current website document repository does not meet any international standards for sharing information.

- **Product development:** CPWF has a working paper series but its niche needs to be clarified vis-à-vis other working paper series of other CG centers. Publishing guidelines need to be updated and a strategy does not exist for widely sharing CPWF research. Little interaction has occurred with the media. During Phase 1 an incredible amount of information (research reports, outputs, etc.) was generated, but it is not easily accessible or widely available.

- **Uptake/Research into Use:** in many instances, communication for development approaches have yet to be integrated into project OLMs to enhance the defined impact of research.
3. The strategy

3.1 Goals and objectives
The information and communication plan described in this strategy supports the CPWF’s goals by:

- **Developing effective information and communication systems** - and mindsets - to support basins, projects and topic working groups to effectively carry out their work.
- **Integrating strategic communication principles, tools and methods** into outcome pathways of basin programs and topic workings to support changes sought.
- **Documenting outcomes and impacts** of research in multiple ways to be used by identified target groups at different levels.
- **Shaping the global development agenda** by communicating research findings in ways that engage audiences, change mindsets and influence key decisions.
- **Ensuring the CPWF brand and identity** is consistently used to maintain and improve the recognition of CPWF and the partners it works with.

3.2 Target Groups
The main target groups of our CPWF communication, information and knowledge sharing are shown below along with who within the program has major responsibility. Some ‘we’ can reach and interact with directly, others we have to work through intermediaries of various types.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client/Target</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CPWF ‘Family’</td>
<td>CPWF secretariat, basin leaders, topic working groups, CPWF board, Advisory Committee, and donors, project leaders, project team members and partners. Focus on sharing and coordination</td>
<td>Secretariat-basins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy-influencers</td>
<td>National, regional and international planners, who make policy and implementation related decisions. Focus on influence and providing evidence based options</td>
<td>Secretariat, Basin and projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development investors</td>
<td>International finance institutions, bi and multi-lateral donors. New approaches, tools and thinking to influence develop program</td>
<td>Secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Professionals</td>
<td>Intergovernmental, non-governmental organizations national and local governments, who use research results in their own work at different levels (i.e. IUCN, WWF, CARE, FAO, local projects). Focus on tools, methods and approaches</td>
<td>Secretariat, Basins and projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researchers and academics</td>
<td>National and international researchers and academics working in partner agencies. Focus on research results</td>
<td>Secretariat, Basins and projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>International, national and regional media. Focus is to develop relationships to get messages out and inform public.</td>
<td>Secretariat, Basins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers/fishers/communities</td>
<td>Focused on local groups in project sites, through boundary partners and through advocacy and awareness raising campaigns</td>
<td>Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brokers, infomediaries</td>
<td>There is a whole critical group of ‘intermediary’ people who help to get knowledge adapted, translated and into use (media is part of this you could argue). The specialists in communication and putting knowledge to use. Process experts. Extension?</td>
<td>Secretariat, Basin and projects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3 Over-arching principles

1. **Communication is an integral part of the research effort:** In a research for development program, communication starts at the beginning of the research cycles and researchers, partners, other stakeholders and users of the research results are actively involved in communication processes throughout the life of the project. We will also work towards the actors and partners in the program being ‘connected’ to one another and to sources of data and knowledge. As such, communication is integrated into basin, project and topic working group outcome pathways.

2. **Open knowledge and open access:** CPWF adheres to the “Triple A approach of CGIAR”:
   - **Availability:** research outputs are stored in appropriate open formats
   - **Accessibility:** Research outputs are publicly available systems follow accepted standards and encourage harvesting and sharing of content.
   - **Applicability:** Research processes are open and inclusive so all perspectives and knowledge are taken into account.

3. **Use of strategic communication approaches to ensure greater impact:** Strategic communication is the use of communication processes (i.e. dialogue) and tools in a planned way to bring about positive social change. A strategic approach can be used, for example, in advocacy for improving interactions with policy makers or in developing local communication campaigns to increase the reach of technologies and information to farmers. It is also important to recognize local cultural norms, rewards and incentive when designing communication strategies. Because ultimately communication is not about producing materials but about changing behaviours or improving decision-making processes. We will emphasize monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of communication processes.

4. **Face-to-face communication and multi-stakeholder platforms are key aspects of communication:** CPWF is developing platforms at different levels to facilitate dialogue on a range of issues. KM staff will assist in facilitating workshops to share experiences and lessons. Examples include the International Forum on Water and Food, basin level reflection workshops and writeshops. At the basin and project levels multi-stakeholder platforms and other dialogue and advocacy tools will be used.

5. **Promote decentralized, diversified and contextualized communication:** we recognize that information and communication happens at all levels and given the diversity in the basins, there is a need to contextualize communication to ensure we are targeting messages appropriately. Likewise we will develop standards and distributed systems which can be adapted and used but provide global coverage.

6. **Fostering partnerships:** Partnerships are essential for making research ‘travel’. Partnerships will be formed to establish information systems so that they can be integrated into other CGIAR systems after the program ends. We will actively enter into partnerships to produce communication products and processes to ensure their relevance and usefulness, and to ensure wide dissemination.

7. **Promoting and understanding the effectiveness of social media and Web 2.0:** The CPWF will promote and use a range of digital tools and media. The CPWF website will act as a ‘portal’ to link and connect users to a range of web-based systems (see box 1). Social media and other web2.0 tools will be used where appropriate. Throughout, it will be important to monitor the use of these systems to contribute back to our understanding of how they can be used in research for development.

**Box 1: CPWF Website**
The CPWF website [www.waterandfood.org](http://www.waterandfood.org) has recently been redesigned (November 2010). The site allows and encourages colleagues in the basins and projects to contribute their own information and news. In addition, the site will take advantage of open source systems and shared repositories as much as possible.

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CPWF Information and communication Strategy - DRAFT for comments

Draft 5th May 2011 by Michael Victor and Tonya Schuetz
4. Intervention areas/ Strategic areas of work

Based on the above, five strategic areas of intervention have been identified. These are functional areas and should be seen as interlinked and complementary rather than separate areas of work. A number of different tools and systems will be developed and used for multiple purposes. The principles outlined above will guide and underpin all activities. In the diagram below, we will also produce ‘local’ knowledge and products adapted for local audiences and stakeholders through our Basin Development Challenge research programs and projects.

4.1 Internal Knowledge Sharing

In a program such as CPWF internal communication and knowledge sharing is a crucial for linking basins’ development programs as well as to support cross-basin sharing through the topic working groups. Some of the key areas for internal knowledge sharing will focus on:

- Supporting monitoring and evaluation processes as a way for internal communication (use of Google documents, knowledge tree, facilitation of reflection workshops, etc)
- Collecting and sharing information that is produced by different actors (use of repositories for documents, videos, pictures, presentations, etc)
- Supporting the use of tools to improve communication across the program (e-letter, yammers, social media, incl. tools for assisting in collaboration such as the use of wikis and Google sites)
- Effective face to face communication and informal interactions. Rich communications.

The table below shows the type of information we will be collecting and how. These will serve both internal information management purposes as well as for disseminating our knowledge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Info to manage</th>
<th>What for</th>
<th>Potential system</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publications &amp; reference materials</td>
<td>Collect, capture and present our explicit knowledge</td>
<td>Currently in-built into site, D-space under consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finalized documents</td>
<td>Collect &amp; document internal documents for institutional memory and compliance</td>
<td>Knowledge tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working documents</td>
<td>Develop ideas and concepts mutually with several people contributing and inputting</td>
<td>Google docs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PowerPoints</td>
<td>Collect our explicit knowledge</td>
<td>SlideShare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photos</td>
<td></td>
<td>Flickr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Videos, films, etc</td>
<td>Focus on meta-data. Feed into suitable not time-bound institutional systems.</td>
<td>Website for Phase 1, open for an improved system (i.e. D-space)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CPWF Information and communication Strategy - DRAFT for comments
Draft 5th May 2011 by Michael Victor and Tonya Schuetz
4.2 Producing Global Knowledge
This area focuses on producing international public goods and ensuring that the explicit knowledge generated is widely accessible and includes:

- Collecting and managing all the explicit knowledge produced by the program
- Making sure that we have access and re-use to e-rights of publications, ensuring that information is on other websites, portals and clearing houses
- Documenting research in different ways such as working papers, briefing notes, research papers. Synthesizing research and results that are of global relevance (see box 2)
- Repackaging Phase 1 results—synthesizing results into a wide range of materials for specific audiences.
- Working with basin coordination and change projects to document research
- Working with specialists in this area—e.g. media, civil society advocacy,

In terms of material production, we will repackage and develop spin-offs recognizing that research has to be packaged in formats appropriate for different audiences. Basins would be expected to formulate their own strategy for improving research communication.

4.3 Support to basins and topic working groups
CPWF is unique in its “research for development” approach by requiring projects to use outcome pathways to link research outputs to intended outcomes (changes in knowledge, attitude, skills and practice) and finally to the desired impact. This allows for the integration of strategic communication approaches and tools into basin and project outcome pathways to support projects to contribute to developmental impact. Doing so will include activities such as:

- Better targeting of materials to communicate research more effectively.
- Improving how policy advocacy is carried. Not just developing ‘policy’ briefs but dialog processes and linkages to the media.
- Developing targeted communication strategies in projects to enhance their defined impact
- Potentially supporting an all Africa Strategy (see box 3)

4.4 Program communication
It is important that the CPWF has its own identity and effectively communicates the impacts of its research and main messages. This area focuses on producing products and information for donors and others interested in the program by developing the CPWF identity in a coherent and consistent manner which provides room for basin identities to also emerge (see box 7). It also focuses on partnership and relations management. Some of the key elements of this will be:

- Developing a strategy for branding and marketing of CPWF at different levels that is consistent and contextualized
- Facilitating establishment and promotion of key CPWF messages based on research.
- Developing a range of public relation materials on a regular basis (CPWF collateral, annual reports, brochures, posters, and the CPWF e-letter).
- Producing outcome stories to communicate the impacts of research.
- Ensuring the website is up-to-date and provides users with relevant and timely information.

Box 2: CPWF Publication series
CPWF is currently revising and updating its publication strategy. The working paper series is being retooled to ensure that it is targeted to development practitioners and researchers and focused on ‘research for development’. The focus would be synthesizing results within or across basins as well as examining how the research is useful for development rather and provoking debate and discussion. CPWF will also be producing a briefing note series to target messages as well as research highlights series to document the on-going outcomes of CPWF research.

Box 3: Developing an all Africa Strategy
CPWF currently works in three rivers basins in the African continent (Limpopo, Nile and Volta). To achieve greater impacts, it has been proposed to develop an “Africa wide strategy” to leverage the impact of three basins and previous research and present it more widely to investors and donor partners. If such an approach is developed an important element will be the communication strategy to support this.
• Support to maintaining and improving partner relations including maintaining a database of partners, developing a Phase 1 partnership strategy to maintain contacts and seeking out new partnerships through networking, attending strategic meetings.

Box 7: Contextualizing branding. The use of ‘basin level icons’
Most of the Basin Programs would like to develop their own “brand” and identity as part of their own communication strategy. This means there is a need to develop a flexible CPWF identity that allows each Basin Program to create an identity appropriate to the local level but linked to the global program, providing legitimacy to the BDCs. One way this will be done is by promoting each BDC to have their own basin logo, with strong linkages to the global identity.

4.5 Influencing the global agenda
A key area for the global program is to ensure that the issues identified at the basin level are raised to the global level. There are a couple of ways we will support this:
• Providing intelligence on strategic meetings that are held globally and regionally
• Liaising with the media (see below)
• Attending key conferences at the regional and basin level

CPWF will actively develop linkages to the media at different levels. At the global level we intend to engage global-level journalists and publication in order to raise the issues emerging from the basins to the global agenda (see box 8) and disseminate emerging research results more widely. At the basin and local level, media should be engaged as part of the process for policy engagement and getting research out to the wider public.

Box 8: Linking global and local media for higher impact.
CPWF is currently exploring the development of a global series on Rivers Basins in Crisis. The first of the series will be produced in collaboration with IUCN and Sida and focus on the issues of hydropower on the Mekong. The purpose of the series is to create greater awareness on water related issues and the alternatives for better managing water resources equitably and sustainably. An innovative aspect of this proposal is the interaction and linkages between global, regional/basin and national level programming. The global program forms the foundation of the communications initiative and legitimizes local broadcast, with subsequent materials being produced for use at the regional and national levels. Adaptations can be used as a dialogue tool, an educational tool or to raise awareness of different stakeholders in the Mekong region. The series would focus on 8-10 river basins around the world that reflect some of the global challenges related to water, particularly in the six river basins that CPWF works in.
5. How we are organized

A network approach will be used whereby different levels are responsible for different actions but are linked together and working in a coordinated fashion at the different levels.

At the program secretariat level, the focus will be on setting the overall guidelines and strategy of the program. It will provide standards which the basins and projects can use in their work. Since this is a decentralized, time bound, partner focused program, guidelines and options will be provided which can be contextualized and adapted to the basin level. We will focus on areas and outcomes the basins cannot do themselves. Anything produced globally should have spinoffs locally and vice versa.

CPWF secretariat has an important catalytic and innovation and learning role to encourage and support the basin partners to become better at research communications. It will focus on developing tools and approaches for project teams, for basin teams, and CPWF-wide.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program level</th>
<th>Basin level</th>
<th>Project level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Internal communication &amp; coordination</td>
<td>• Develop basin communication strategy</td>
<td>• Sharing information with other projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outreach (media, news, intelligence, networking)</td>
<td>• Coordinate communication and info management at basin level</td>
<td>• Develop communication plan linked to OLMs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Corporate Communication</td>
<td>• Outreach (communication products, website media, news, intelligence)</td>
<td>• Documentation of research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Synthesis and documentation of research</td>
<td>• Policy advocacy</td>
<td>• Internal communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Coordinate and support basins, projects and topic working groups</td>
<td>• Support projects to integrate communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop guidelines and standards for use across</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The global program will produce publications and materials of global significance and support other levels (basins, projects and topic working groups). It will also assist in capitalizing on research results to strengthen global recognition of CPWF development outcomes. It will develop information and communication systems which support basins to share explicit knowledge widely and improve cross-basin sharing. It will support the basins and projects in developing communication processes and products to support changes sought.

It is expected that the basin communication and information staff will play a key role in coordinating and linking projects together as well as linking to the global program. They will develop and implement communication strategies to support the Coordination and Change project as well as support projects in finding ways to communicate their research findings that support the identified outcome pathways. They will produce communication products (publications, videos, etc) and facilitate dialogues, workshops and other processes appropriate for the basin level and link to the goals of the BDC.

Basins projects will be in charge of generating and producing information and communication materials and developing communication processes that are linked to the changes they seek (rather than producing information or research reports with little strategic value). They will do this in coordination with other projects and the coordination and change project.