

# Principles and Guidelines for IAHS HELPING Working Groups

*Last updated: 6 September 2024*



## **Aims:**

- 1) To provide overarching principles for all working groups to facilitate progress, ensure accountability, and provide reporting to IAHS.
- 2) To provide guidance on best practice for WGs to be inclusive, effective, and sustainable.

## **Overarching Principles:**

- 1) Working groups are focused on and contribute to the core themes and outcomes of the IAHS Scientific Decade.
- 2) WGs are accountable to the HELPING Theme leaders, the Chair, the Steering group (i.e. IAHS management team) and ultimately the IAHS Bureau.
- 3) Working groups are voluntary and community-based. As such, IAHS will support WGs through Theme leaders with access to [collaborative resources](#) and networking, communication, outreach, website presence, etc.
- 4) No funding is available from IAHS, but the IAHS community should encourage and support seeking of funding by WGs.
- 5) WGs should be diverse and inclusive, providing opportunities to all members.

## **Best Practice / Guidelines:**

- 1) *Inclusivity and diversity of WGs.* WGs can be more creative, productive and effective if they have diverse leadership and membership (e.g. country, institution type, career level, scientific background/experience) and ways to engage and contribute.
- 2) *Leadership of WGs.* Leadership can be more effective via leadership teams, to share the burden, to draw from diverse expertise and experience, and provide opportunities for more people to learn leadership skills. ECRs should be given leadership opportunities - they can often be more active and have more time to lead a WG. Leadership terms could be time limited (e.g. 2-years) to enable this.
- 3) *Proposing a new WG.* New WGs are welcome to be proposed. Ideas should be sent to IAHS via a proposal form on the HELPING [website](#).

- 4) *Setting up WGs.* WGs should develop a documented outline of goals (and links to the overarching goals of the HELPING Decade), planned outputs and outcomes to guide the WG and to communicate the WG externally. Overarching research questions can be developed and aligned with HELPING and the [23 UPHs](#). Actions for the WG should be developed for the next 6-12 months to help focus the WG and updated on a regular basis.
- 5) *Sustaining the WG.* Regular engagement with the WG membership will keep things going, via email updates, online meetings/webinars and potentially in person events (meetings, workshops, conference sessions). Online surveys can be used to solicit broad input from the WG membership. Recognize that not all members will be engaged all the time. Regular email updates will help keep everyone informed and indicate how to engage more in the future.
- 6) *Communication / Outreach.* WGs should communicate their progress externally, to other WGs, the IAHS community, interested stakeholders and the general public. IAHS can provide resources to support this (IAHS website / WG website, blogs, E-news, etc). *Maybe say something about use of and training in social media, and other comms pathways.*
- 7) *Documenting WG progress.* Progress will be reported on a 6-monthly basis to their Theme leader using a standard report template. The report will be shared with the IAHS Bureau and a version shared with the IAHS community. WGs can also document progress via other pathways (internal updates, website, social media, etc.).
- 8) *Cross WG interactions.* These are encouraged to facilitate sharing of knowledge, best practice and new ideas and initiatives. Webinars are a good way of sharing with other WGs. Cross WG activities, such as joint conference sessions and workshops, can help to develop new ideas and collaborations.
- 9) *Examples of best practice.* Much has been learnt from previous scientific decades on how to run an effective WG. WGs are encouraged to share what has worked well (and has not) with other WGs. The list will be updated by Theme and WG leads as more input is provided. The following examples have been collected on what did and didn't work during the Panta Rhei decade:

a) What worked well:

- i) In-person workshops to get to know the people, normally 2 days for 30-50 people. The workshops were used to create ideas for potential research, taking 1-2 ideas forward for a collaborative paper. They were typically organised around conferences - EGU funds may be available for workshop organisation. Here are examples of papers created as part of the Panta Rhei IAHS decade by the Drought in the Anthropocene WG:

(1) The kickoff paper when the WG group started:

<https://www.nature.com/articles/ngeo2646>

(2) Paper on Flash droughts:

<https://journals.ametsoc.org/view/journals/wcas/16/1/WCAS-D-23-0015.1.xml>

(3) Joint paper with Floods WG:

<https://nhess.copernicus.org/articles/22/2201/2022/>

- ii) Conference sessions and meetings (EGU/AGU sessions, EGU splinter meetings for networking.
  - iii) Monthly/bimonthly webinars, for group members and stakeholders/external partners to present.
  - iv) Having a Newsletter once a month.
  - v) Setting up a WG leadership team with shared responsibilities.
- b) What did not work:
- i) Using Slack for communication.
- 10) *Closing a WG*. If a WG is no longer viable, the WG lead should inform the relevant Theme lead as well as members of the WG.

#### **Resources and Contacts:**

- 1) HELPING Website:
  - a) HELPING initiative: <https://iahs.info/Initiatives/Scientific-Decades/HELPING/>
  - b) HELPING Themes and WGs: <https://iahs.info/Initiatives/Scientific-Decades/helping-working-groups/>
- 2) Contacts:
  - a) HELPING Chair: Berit Arheimer, [Berit.Arheimer@smhi.se](mailto:Berit.Arheimer@smhi.se)
  - b) Theme 1 lead: Justin Sheffield, [justin.sheffield@soton.ac.uk](mailto:justin.sheffield@soton.ac.uk)
  - c) Theme 2 lead: Ana Mijic, [ana.mijic@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:ana.mijic@imperial.ac.uk)
  - d) Theme 3 lead: Adeyemi Olusola, [aolusola@yorku.ca](mailto:aolusola@yorku.ca)