



## **Towards INMS: Targeted Research for improving understanding of the Global Nitrogen Cycle towards the establishment of an International Nitrogen Management System.**

**Funders:** Catalytic funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), plus funding from project partners and other co-funders.

**Implementing Agency:** United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

**Executing Agency:** NERC Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (CEH) on behalf of the International Nitrogen Initiative (INI).

### **Toward INMS Concept**

Currently there is no coordinated science process to support international nitrogen policy development. 'Towards INMS' focuses on working out how such science-support could look, and preparing the capability to deliver it. It is important remember that an eventual INMS would not be a policy process. That is the job of governments and stakeholders. However, the scientific community has a key role to play in developing the evidence streams, data, indicators, modelling tools, cost-benefit analysis and scenarios that can serve to inform nitrogen policy processes.

Conversely, there are many international policy frameworks where nitrogen plays a key role. These include the Global Programme of Action on Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA), the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP), the Montreal Protocol (given the role of N<sub>2</sub>O in stratospheric ozone depletion), the Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), as well as many other regional agreements. While it is an open question how such bodies could coordinate more effectively in future, it is the contention of INMS that a joined-up approach to manage the nitrogen cycle will offer multiple co-benefits of relevance to them all.

A core challenge of INMS is to quantify these co-benefits and show how they be applied to develop a stronger gravity of common cause across the nitrogen cycle. For example, by focusing increasingly on nitrogen use efficiency across the society, there is the potential to develop jobs through the Nitrogen Green Economy, show the opportunities for benefit sharing, and better understand how to overcome the barriers-to-change.

### **Project Status**

Following feedback and iteration with the GEF Secretariat, the project proposal and initiation stage was accepted by GEF in Spring 2014. The contract for the project preparation grant was signed on 24 December 2014. We are now engaged in the project preparation grant (PPG) phase, which is being conducted over the months ahead, with submission of documents in Summer 2015. The anticipated timing is that completion of the PPG phase will allow the INMS project to run from late 2015 to 2019.



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## Tasks during the Project Preparation Phase

During the PPG phase, as Executing Agency, we need to achieve several things:

- Further develop buy-in from partners as regards the overall strategy
- Refine the project design, work packages and roles
- Confirm budgetary commitments, including both cash contributions and contributions-in-kind (CIK)
- Confirm the governance structure and consortium agreement
- Translate the agreed strategy and plan into the required detailed package of Project Documents (inc. the 'ProDoc') to be submitted to GEF for endorsement.

## Project Financing

The GEF has committed US\$6 million as catalytic funding to the INMS process, and in order for the project to be successful, we all need to bring together partner contributions of several times this amount (c. US\$40 million). For this to be realized, the project will rely the commitment of project partners, both in terms of cash contributions and CIK, and these will have a major influence on the detailed design of the project. Because of the dependence on other funding sources, the project design is naturally an iterative process. The earlier partners can confirm their co-financing and their associated priorities, the easier the process becomes.

Some additional supporting cash contributions have already been made, through specific proposals that were explicitly written to link with 'Towards INMS'. These include the "Nitrogen in Future Earth" project, awarded to INI by Future Earth (\$70,000) and the "INMSpump-priming" (INMSpp) project, won under stiff competition through the International Opportunities Fund of the UK Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) (\$600,000). Information on these activities will be presented in the INMS newsletter and in Lisbon. In particular, the latter project (INMSpp) focuses on Nitrogen integrated assessment modelling and will host a specific workshop on this topic in Edinburgh on 5-7 May 2015. Finally, one of the project business partners, the chemical company BASF will finance its 2<sup>nd</sup> 'Nitrogen Fireside Chat' workshop, as a contribution to the developing process, with a focus on engagement with different world regions (27-28 March 2015). These confirmed funding commitments already illustrate a productive start to the process.

## Further information

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